

THE  
DRAMATIC WORKS

OF  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,

FROM THE OCTAVO EDITION OF

ISAAC REED, Esq.

**Shakespeare.**

STEREOTYPE EDITION.

LONDON:

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THE  
DRAMATIC WORKS  
OF  
William Shakespeare,

FROM THE CORRECT EDITION OF  
ISAAC REED, Esq.

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WITH COPIOUS  
*ANNOTATIONS.*

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VOL. II.

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MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.  
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.  
TWELFTH NIGHT.  
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

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J. SUTHERLAND, EDINBURGH; ALSO J. CUMMING, DUBLIN.

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1822.



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WITH NOTES  
AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. II.

MIDWINTER-NIGHT'S DREAM.  
THE TITUS ANDRONICUS.  
THE TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.  
THE TEMPEST.

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at Stationers' Hall, Oct. 8, 1600, by Thomas Fisher. It is  
probable that the hint for it was received from Dekker's  
*Knight's Tale*. A

# MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

*The Midsummer-Night's Dream* I suppose to have been  
written in 1592. See *An Attempt to ascertain the Order of  
Shakespeare's Plays*, Vol. II. MALONE.



MIDSUMMER-NIGHTS

DREAM.

VOL. II

B



**A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.]** This play was entered at Stationers' Hall, Oct. 8, 1600, by Thomas Fisher. It is probable that the hint for it was received from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*.

There is an old black letter pamphlet by W. Bettie, called *Titania and Theseus*, entered at Stationers' Hall, in 1608; but Shakespeare has taken no hints from it. *Titania* is also the name of the Queen of the Fairies in Decker's *Whore of Babylon*, 1607.

STEEVENS.

*The Midsummer-Night's Dream* I suppose to have been written in 1592. See *An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakespeare's Plays*, Vol. II.

MALONE.



## PERSONS REPRESENTED.\*

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THESEUS, *Duke of Athens.*

EGEUS, *Father to Hermia.*

LYSANDER,        }  
DEMETRIUS,        } *in love with Hermia.*

PHILOSTRATE, *Master of the Revels to Theseus.*

QUINCE, *the Carpenter.*

SNUG, *the Joiner.*

BOTTOM, *the Weaver.*

FLUTE, *the Bellows-mender.*

SNOUT, *the Tinker.*

STARVELING, *the Tailor.*

HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*

HERMIA, *daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.*

HELENA, *in love with Demetrius.*

OBERON, *King of the Fairies.*

TITANIA, *Queen of the Fairies.*

PUCK, or ROBIN-GOODFELLOW, *a Fairy.*

PEAS-BLOSSOM,

COBWEB,

MOTH,

MUSTARD-SEED,

*Pyramus,*

*Thisbe,*

*Wall,*

*Moonshine,*

*Lion,*

} *Fairies.*

} *Characters in the Interlude performed by  
the Clowns.*

*Other Fairies attending their King and Queen.*

*Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.*

**SCENE**—Athens, and a wood not far from it.

\* The enumeration of persons was first made by Mr. Rowe.—Steevens.



ACT I  
MIDSUMMER

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;  
But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with circumstance, and solemnity.

# MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

Enter Egeus, Herms, and Demetrius.

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!  
The. Thanks, good Egeus: What's the news with  
thee?

Ege. Full of vexation come I, with complaint  
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.—  
Stand forth, Demetrius;—my noble lord,

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—Athens. *A room in the palace of Theseus*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, and  
attendants.*

*The.* Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in  
Another moon: but, oh, methinks, how slow  
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,  
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,  
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

*Hip.* Four days will quickly steep themselves in nights;  
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;  
And then the moon, like to a silver bow  
New bent in heaven, shall behold the night  
Of our solemnities.

*The.* Go, Philostrate,  
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;  
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;  
Turn melancholy forth to funerals,  
The pale companion is not for our pomp.—

[*Exit. PHILOSTRATE.*]



Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
And won thy love, doing thee injuries ;  
But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

*Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, and DEMETRIUS.*

*Ege.* Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke !

*The.* Thanks, good Egeus : What's the news with thee ?

*Ege.* Full of vexation come I, with complaint  
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.—  
Stand forth, Demetrius ;—My noble lord,  
This man hath my consent to marry her :—  
Stand forth, Lysander ;—and, my gracious duke,  
This hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child :  
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,  
And interchang'd love-tokens with my child :  
Thou hast by moon-light at her window sung,  
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love ;  
And stol'n th' impression of her fantasy  
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,  
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweet-meats ; messengers  
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth :  
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart  
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,  
To stubborn harshness :—And, my gracious duke,  
Be it so she will not here before your grace  
Consent to marry with Demetrius,  
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens ;  
As she is mine, I may dispose of her :  
Which shall be either to this gentleman,  
Or to her death ; according to our law,  
Immediately provided in that case.



*The.* What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, fair maid:  
To you your father should be as a god;  
One that compos'd your beauties; yea, and one  
To whom you are but as a form in wax,  
By him imprinted, and within his power  
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.  
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

*Her.* So is Lysander.

*The.* In himself he is:  
But, in this kind, wanting your father's voice,  
The other must be held the worthier.

*Her.* I would, my father look'd but with my eyes.

*The.* Rather your eyes must with his judgement look.

*Her.* I do entreat your grace to pardon me.  
I know not by what power I am made bold;  
Nor how it may concern my modesty,  
In such a presence here, to plead my thoughts:  
But I beseech your grace that I may know  
The worst that may befall me in this case,  
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

*The.* Either to die the death, or to abjure  
For ever the society of men.  
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires  
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,  
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,  
You can endure the livery of a nun;  
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,  
To live a barren sister all your life,  
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.  
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,  
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage:  
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,  
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn,



Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

*Her.* So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,  
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up  
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke  
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

*The.* Take time to pause: and, by the next new  
moon,

(The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,  
For everlasting bond of fellowship,)  
Upon that day either prepare to die,  
For disobedience to your father's will;  
Or else, to wed Demetrius, as he would:  
Or on Diana's altar to protest,  
For aye, austerity and single life.

*Dem.* Relent, sweet Hermia;—And, Lysander, yie  
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

*Lys.* You have her father's love, Demetrius;  
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

*Ege.* Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love;  
And what is mine my love shall render him;  
And she is mine; and all my right of her  
I do estate unto Demetrius.

*Lys.* I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,  
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;  
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,  
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';  
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,  
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia:  
Why should not I then prosecute my right?  
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,  
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,  
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,  
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,



Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

*The.* I must confess, that I have heard so much,  
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;  
But, being over-full of self-affairs,  
My mind did lose it.—But, Demetrius, come,  
And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,  
I have some private schooling for you both.—  
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself  
To fit your fancies to your father's will;  
Or else the law of Athens yields you up  
(Which by no means we may extenuate,)  
To death, or to a vow of single life.—  
Come, my Hippolyta; What cheer, my love?—  
Demetrius, and Egeus, go along:  
I must employ you in some business  
Against our nuptial; and confer with you  
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

*Ege.* With duty, and desire we follow you.

[*Exeunt THE. HIP. EGE. DEM. and train*]

*Lys.* How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?  
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

*Her.* Belike, for want of rain; which I could well  
Beteem them from the tempest of mine eyes.

*Lys.* Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth:  
But, either it was different in blood;

*Her.* O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!

*Lys.* Or else misgraffed, in respect of years;

*Her.* O spite! too old to be engag'd to young!

*Lys.* Or else it stood upon the choice of friends:

*Her.* O hell! to choose love by another's eye!

*Lys.* Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,



War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it ;  
Making it momentany as a sound,  
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream ;  
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,  
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,  
And ere a man hath power to say,—Behold !  
The jaws of darkness do devour it up :  
So quick bright things come to confusion.

*Her.* If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,  
It stands as an edict in destiny :  
Then let us teach our trial patience,  
Because it is a customary cross ;  
As due to love, as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,  
Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's followers.

*Lys.* A good persuasion ; therefore, hear me, *Hermia*.  
I have a widow aunt, a dowager  
Of great revenue, and she hath no child :  
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues ;  
And she respects me as her only son.  
There, gentle *Hermia*, may I marry thee ;  
And to that place the sharp Athenian law  
Cannot pursue us : If thou lov'st me then,  
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night ;  
And in the wood, a league without the town,  
Where I did meet thee once with *Helena*,  
To do observance to a morn of May,  
There will I stay for thee.

*Her.* My good *Lysander* !  
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow ;  
By his best arrow with the golden head ;  
By the simplicity of Venus' doves ;  
By that which knitteth souls, and prospers loves ;



And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,  
When the false Trojan under sail was seen;  
By all the vows that ever men have broke,  
In number more than ever women spoke;—  
In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

*Lys.* Keep promise, love : Look, here comes Helena.

*Enter HELENA.*

*Her.* God speed fair Helena ! Whither away ?

*Hel.* Call you me fair ? that fair again unsay.  
Demetrius loves your fair : O happy fair !  
Your eyes are lode-stars ; and your tongue's sweet air  
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,  
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.  
Sickness is catching ; O, were favour so !  
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go ;  
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,  
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.  
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,  
The rest I'll give to be to you translated.  
O, teach me how you look ; and with what art  
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

*Her.* I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

*Hel.* O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such  
skill !

*Her.* I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

*Hel.* O, that my prayers could such affection move !

*Her.* The more I hate, the more he follows me.

*Hel.* The more I love, the more he hateth me.

*Her.* His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

*Hel.* None, but your beauty ; 'Would that fault were  
mine !



*Her.* Take comfort ; he no more shall see my face ;  
 Lysander and myself will fly this place.—  
 Before the time I did Lysander see,  
 Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me :  
 O then, what graces in my love do dwell,  
 That he hath turn'd a heaven unto hell !

*Lys.* Helen, to you our minds we will unfold :  
 'To-morrow night when Phœbe doth behold  
 Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass,  
 Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,  
 (A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,)  
 Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.

*Her.* And in the wood, where often you and I  
 Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,  
 Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet :  
 There my Lysander and myself shall meet :  
 And thence, from Athens, turn away our eyes,  
 To seek new friends and stranger companies.  
 Farewell, sweet playfellow ; pray thou for us,  
 And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius !—  
 Keep word, Lysander : we must starve our sight  
 From lovers' food, till morrow deep midnight.

[*Exit. HER.*]

*Lys.* I will, my Hermia.—Helena, adieu :  
 As you on him, Demetrius dote on you ! [Exit. *LYS*]

*Hel.* How happy some, o'er other some can be !  
 Through Athens I am thought as fair as she ;  
 But what of that ? Demetrius thinks not so ;  
 He will not know what all but he do know.  
 And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,  
 So I, admiring of his qualities.  
 Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
 Love can transpose to form and dignity.



Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:  
Nor hath love's mind of any judgement taste;  
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:  
And therefore is love said to be a child,  
Because in choice he is so oft beguil'd.  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
So the boy love is perjur'd every where:  
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,  
He hail'd down oaths, that he was only mine;  
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,  
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt.  
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:  
Then to the wood will he, to-morrow night,  
Pursue her; and for this intelligence  
If I have thanks, it is a dear expence:  
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,  
To have his sight thither, and back again. [Exit

SCENE II.—*The same. A room in a cottage.*

*Enter* SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, QUINCE, *and*  
STARVELING.

*Quin.* Is all our company here?

*Bot.* You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

*Quin.* Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

*Bot.* First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point.



Quin. Marry, our play is—The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry.—Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll: Masters, spread yourselves.

Quin. Answer, as I call you.—Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bot. Ready: Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes: I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest:—Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

“The raging rocks,  
 “With shivering shocks,  
 “Shall break the locks  
 “Of prison-gates:  
 “And Phibbus’ car  
 “Shall shine from far,  
 “And make and mar  
 “The foolish fates.”

This was lofty!—Now name the rest of the players.—This is Ercles’ vein, a tyrant’s vein; a lover is more condoling.

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You must take Thisby on you.

Flu. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.



*Flu.* Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

*Quin.* That's all one; you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

*Bot.* An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too: I'll speak in a monstrous little voice;—*Thisne, Thisne, —Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear; thy Thisby dear! and lady dear!*

*Quin.* No, no; you must play Pyramus, and, Flute, you Thisby.

*Bot.* Well, proceed.

*Quin.* Robin Starveling, the tailor.

*Star.* Here, Peter Quince.

*Quin.* Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.—Tom Snout, the tinker.

*Snout.* Here, Peter Quince.

*Quin.* You, Pyramus's father; myself, Thisby's father;—Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part:—and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

*Snug.* Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

*Quin.* You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

*Bot.* Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say, *Let him roar again, Let him roar again.*

*Quin.* An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

*All.* That would hang us every mother's son.

*Bot.* I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more



discretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

*Quin.* You can play no part but Pyramus: for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely, gentleman-like man; therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

*Bot.* Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

*Quin.* Why, what you will.

*Bot.* I will discharge it in either your straw-coloured beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.

*Quin.* Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play bare-faced.—But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moon-light; there will we rehearse: for if we meet in the city, we shall be dog'd with company, and our devices known. In the mean time I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

*Bot.* We will meet; and there we may rehearse more obscenely, and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; adieu.

*Quin.* At the Duke's oak we meet.

*Bot.* Enough; Hold, or cut bow-strings.

[*Exeunt.*]



## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A wood near Athens.*

*Enter a Fairy at one door, and PUCK at another.*

*Puck.* How now, spirit ! whither wander you ?

*Fai.* Over hill, over dale,

Thorough bush, thorough briar,

Over park, over pale,

Thorough flood, thorough fire,

I do wander every where,

Swifter than the moon's sphere ;

And I serve the fairy queen,

To dew her orbs upon the green :

The cowslips tall her pensioners be ;

In their gold coats spots you see ;

Those be rubies, fairy favours,

In those freckles live their savours :

I must go seek some dew-drops here,

And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

Farewell, thou lob of spirits, I'll be gone ;

Our queen and all her elves come here anon

*Puck.* The king doth keep his revels here to-night ;

Take heed, the queen come not within his sight.

For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,

Because that she, as her attendant, hath

A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king ;

She never had so sweet a changeling :

And jealous Oberon would have the child

Knight of his train to trace the forests wild :



But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,  
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy :  
And now they never meet in grove, or green,  
By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,  
But they do square ; that all their elves, for fear,  
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

*Fai.* Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite,  
Call'd Robin Good-fellow : are you not he,  
That fright the maidens of the villagery ;  
Skim milk ; and sometimes labour in the quern,  
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn ;  
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm ;  
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm ?  
'Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,  
You do their work, and they shall have good luck :  
Are not you he ?

*Puck.* Thou speak'st aright ;  
I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,  
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal :  
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
In very likeness of a roasted crab ;  
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,  
And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.  
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me ;  
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And *tailor* cries, and falls into a cough ;  
And then the whole quire hold their hips, and *loffe* ;  
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.—



But room, Faery, here comes Oberon.

*Fai.* And here my mistress :—'Would that he were gone !

**SCENE II.**—*Enter OBERON, at one door, with his train, and TITANIA, at another, with hers.*

*Obe.* Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.

*Tita.* What, jealous Oberon ? Fairy, skip hence ;  
I have forsworn his bed and company.

*Obe.* Tarry, rash wanton ; Am not I thy lord ?

*Tita.* Then I must be thy lady : But I know  
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy land,  
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,  
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love  
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,  
Come from the farthest steep of India ?  
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,  
Your buskin'd mistress, and your warrior love,  
To Theseus must be wedded ; and you come  
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

*Obe.* How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,  
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,  
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus ?  
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night  
From Perigenia, whom he ravished ?  
And make him with fair *Æglé* break his faith,  
With Ariadne, and Antiopa ?

*Tita.* These are the forgeries of jealousy :  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,  
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,  
Or on the beached margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,



But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
Therefore the winds' piping to us in vain,  
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea  
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land,  
Have every pelting river made so proud,  
That they have overborne their continents:  
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,  
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn  
Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard:  
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,  
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock;  
The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud;  
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,  
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable:  
The human mortals want their winter here;  
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:—  
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
That rheumatick diseases do abound:  
And thorough this distemperature, we see  
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts  
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;  
And on old Hyems' chin, and icy crown,  
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds  
Is, as in mockery, set: The spring, the summer,  
The childing autumn, angry winter, change  
Their wonted liveries; and the 'mazed world,  
By their increase, now knows not which is which:  
And this same progeny of evils comes  
From our debate, from our dissention;  
We are their parents and original.

*Obe.* Do you amend it then; it lies in you:  
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?



I do but beg a little changeling boy,  
To be my henchman.

*Tita.* Set your heart at rest,  
The fairy land buys not the child of me.  
His mother was a vot'ress of my order :  
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,  
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side ;  
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,  
Marking th' embarked traders on the flood ;  
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive,  
And grow big-bellied, with the wanton wind :  
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,  
(Following her womb, then rich with my young'squire,)  
Would imitate ; and sail upon the land,  
To fetch me trifles, and return again,  
As from a voyage, rich with merchandize.  
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die ;  
And, for her sake, I do rear up her boy :  
And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

*Obe.* How long within this wood intend you stay ?

*Tita.* Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day.  
If you will patiently dance in our round,  
And see our moon-light revels, go with us ;  
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

*Obe.* Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

*Tita.* Not for thy kingdom.—Fairies, away :  
We shall chide down-right, if I longer stay.

[*Exeunt* TITANIA, and her train

*Obe.* Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove,  
Till I torment thee for this injury.—  
My gentle Puck, come hither : Thou remember'st  
Since once I sat upon a promontory,  
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back,



Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,  
That the rude sea grew civil at her song ;  
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,  
To hear the sea-maid's musick.

*Puck.*

I remember.

*Obe.* That very time I saw, (but thou could'st not,)  
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
Cupid all arm'd : a certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal, throned by the west ;  
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts :  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon ;  
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,  
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.  
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell :  
It fell upon a little western flower,—  
Before, milk-white ; now purple with love's wound,—  
And maidens call it, love-in-idleness.  
Fetch me that flower ; the herb I show'd thee once ;  
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid,  
Will make or man or woman madly dote  
Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
Fetch me this herb : and be thou here again,  
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

*Puck.* I'll put a girdle round about the earth  
In forty minutes.

[*Exit Puck*]

*Obe.* Having once this juice,  
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,  
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes :  
The next thing then she waking looks upon,  
(Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,  
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,)



She shall pursue it with the soul of love.  
 And ere I take this charm off from her sight,  
 (As I can take it, with another herb,)  
 I'll make her render up her page to me.  
 But who comes here? I am invisible;  
 And I will over-hear their conference.

*Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA following him.*

*Dem.* I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.  
 Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?  
 The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.  
 Thou told'st me, they were stol'n into this wood,  
 And here am I, and wood within this wood,  
 Because I cannot meet with Hermia.  
 Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

*Hel.* You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;  
 But yet you draw not iron, for my heart  
 Is true as steel: Leave you your power to draw,  
 And I shall have no power to follow you.

*Dem.* Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?  
 Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth  
 Tell you—I do not, nor I cannot love you?

*Hel.:* And even for that do I love you the more.  
 I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,  
 The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:  
 Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,  
 Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,  
 Unworthy as I am, to follow you.  
 What worser place can I beg in your love,  
 (And yet a place of high respect with me,)  
 Than to be used as you use your dog?

*Dem.* Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;  
 For I am sick, when I do look on thee.



*Hel.* And I am sick, when I look on you.

*Dem.* You do impeach your modesty too much,  
To leave the city, and commit yourself  
Into the hands of one that loves you not;  
To trust the opportunity of night,  
And the ill counsel of a desert place,  
With the rich worth of your virginity.

*Hel.* Your virtue is my privilege for that.  
It is not night, when I do see your face,  
Therefore I think I am not in the night:  
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company;  
For you, in my respect, are all the world:  
Then how can it be said, I am alone,  
When all the world is here to look on me?

*Dem.* I'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,  
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

*Hel.* The wildest hath not such a heart as you.  
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd;  
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;  
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind  
Makes speed to catch the tiger: Bootless speed!  
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies.

*Dem.* I will not stay thy questions; let me go:  
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe  
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

*Hel.* Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,  
You do me mischief. Fye, Demetrius!  
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:  
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;  
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.  
I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,  
To die upon the hand I love so well.

[*Exeunt DEM and HER.*]



*Obe.* Fare thee well, nymph : ere he do leave this  
grove,  
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.—

*Re-enter PUCK.*

Hast thou the flower there ? Welcome, wanderer.

*Puck.* Ay, there it is.

*Obe.* I pray thee, give it me.  
I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,  
Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows ;  
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,  
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine :  
There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,  
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight ;  
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,  
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in :  
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,  
And make her full of hateful fantasies.  
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove :  
A sweet Athenian lady is in love  
With a disdainful youth : anoint his eyes ;  
But do it, when the next thing he espies  
May be the lady : Thou shalt know the man  
By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
Effect it with some care ; that he may prove  
More fond on her, than she upon her love :  
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

*Puck.* Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeun*



SCENE III.—*Another part of the wood.**Enter TITANIA, with her train.*

*Tita.* Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song ;  
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence ;  
 Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds ;  
 Some, war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,  
 To make my small elves coats ; and some, keep back  
 The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders  
 At our quaint spirits : Sing me now asleep ;  
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

## SONG.

1 FAI. *You spotted snakes, with double tongue,  
 Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen ;  
 Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong ;  
 Come not near our fairy queen :*

## CHORUS.

*Philomel, with melody,  
 Sing in our sweet lullaby ;  
 Lulla, lulla, lullaby ; lulla, lulla, lullaby  
 Never harm, nor spell nor charm,  
 Come our lovely lady nigh :  
 So, good night, with lullaby.*

## II.

2 FAI. *Weaving spiders, come not here ,  
 Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence :  
 Beetles black, approach not near ;  
 Worm, nor snail, do no offence.*

## CHORUS.

*Philomel, with melody, &c.*

1 Fai. Hence, away ; now all is well :  
 One, aloof, stand sentinel.

[*Exeunt Fairies.* TITANIA sleeps



*Enter OBERON.*

*Obe.* What thou seest, when thou dost wake,

*[Squeezes the flower on TITANIA'S eye-lids]*

Do it for thy true love take ;

Love, and languish for his sake :

Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,

Pard, or boar with bristled hair,

In thy eye that shall appear

When thou wak'st, it is thy dear ;

Wake, when some vile thing is near. *[Exit]*

*Enter LYSANDER and HERMIA.*

*Lys.* Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood

And to speak troth, I have forgot our way ;

We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,

And tarry for the comfort of the day.

*Her.* Be it so, Lysander : find you out a bed,

For I upon this bank will rest my head.

*Lys.* One turf shall serve as pillow for us both ;

One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

*Her.* Nay, good Lysander ; for my sake, my dear,

Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

*Lys.* O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence ;

Love takes the meaning, in love's conference.

I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit ;

So that but one heart we can make of it :

Two bosoms interchained with an oath ;

So then, two bosoms, and a single troth.

Then, by your side no bed-room me deny ;

For, lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

*Her.* Lysander riddles very prettily :—



Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,  
If Hermia meant to say, Lysander lied.  
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy  
Lie further off; in human modesty  
Such separation, as, may well be said,  
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid:  
So far be distant; and good night, sweet friend:  
Thy love ne'er alter, till thy sweet life end!

*Lys.* Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;  
And then end life, when I end loyalty!  
Here is my bed: Sleep give thee all his rest!

*Her.* With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd!  
[*They sleep*]

*Enter PUCK.*

*Puck.* Through the forest have I gone,  
But Athenian found I none,  
On whose eyes I might approve  
This flower's force in stirring love.  
Night and silence! who is here?  
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:  
This is he my master said,  
Despised the Athenian maid;  
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,  
On the dank and dirty ground.  
Pretty soul! she durst not lie  
Near this lack-love, kill-courtesy.  
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw  
All the power this charm doth owe:  
When thou wak'st, let love forbid  
Sleep his seat on thy eye-lid.  
So awake, when I am gone;  
For I must now to Oberon. [Exit]



*Enter DEMETRIUS and HELENA, running.*

*Hel.* Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

*Dem.* I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

*Hel.* O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

*Dem.* Stay, on thy peril; I alone will go.

*[Exit DEMETRIUS.]*

*Hel.* O, I am out of breath in this fond chace!

The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.

Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;

For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.

How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:

If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.

No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;

For beasts that meet me, run away for fear:

Therefore, no marvel, though Demetrius

Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.

What wicked and dissembling glass of mine

Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?—

But who is here?—Lysander! on the ground!

Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound:—

Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

*Lys.* And run through fire I will, for thy sweet sake.

*[Waking]*

Transparent Helena! Nature here shows art,

That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.

Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word

Is that vile name, to perish on my sword!

*Hel.* Do not say so, Lysander; say not so:

What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?

Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.



*Lys.* Content with Hermia? No: I do repent  
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.  
Not Hermia, but Helena I love:  
Who will not change a raven for a dove?  
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;  
And reason says you are the worthier maid.  
Things growing are not ripe until their season:  
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;  
And touching now the point of human skill,  
Reason becomes the marshall to my will,  
And leads me to your eyes: where I o'erlook  
Love's stories, written in love's richest book.

*Hel.* Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?  
When, at your hands, did I deserve this scorn?  
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,  
That I did never, no, nor never can,  
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,  
But you must flout my insufficiency?  
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,  
In such disdainful manner me to woo.  
But fare you well: perforce I must confess,  
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.  
O, that a lady, of one man refus'd,  
Should, of another, therefore be abus'd! [*Exit.*]

*Lys.* She sees not Hermia:—Hermia, sleep thou there;  
And never may'st thou come Lysander near!  
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things  
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;  
Or, as the heresies, that men do leave,  
Are hated most of those they did deceive;  
So thou, my surfeit, and my heresy,  
Of all be hated; but the most of me!



And all my powers, address your love and might,  
To honour Helen, and to be her knight! [Exit.

*Her.* [starting.] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy  
best,

To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!

Ah me, for pity!—what a dream was here?

Lysander, look, how I do quake with fear:

Methought a serpent eat my heart away,

And you sat smiling at his cruel prey:—

Lysander! what, remov'd? Lysander! lord!

What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?

Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear;

Speak, of all loves; I swoon almost with fear.

No?—then I well perceive you are not nigh:

Either death, or you, I'll find immediately. [Exit.

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## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The same. The Queen of Fairies lying asleep.*

*Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, and  
STARVELING*

*Bot.* Are we all met?

*Quin.* Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient  
place for our rehearsal: This green plot shall be our  
stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house; and we  
will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.



*Bot.* Peter Quince,—

*Quin.* What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

*Bot.* There are things in this comedy of *Pyramus and Thisby*, that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

*Snout.* By'r'lakin, a parlous fear.

*Star.* I believe, we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

*Bot.* Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue: and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not killed indeed: and, for the more better assurance, tell them, that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: This will put them out of fear.

*Quin.* Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

*Bot.* No, make it two more: let it be written in eight and eight.

*Snout.* Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

*Star.* I fear it, I promise you.

*Bot.* Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing: for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion, living; and we ought to look to it.

*Snout.* Therefore, another prologue must tell, he is not a lion.

*Bot.* Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect, —Ladies, or fair ladies, I would wish you, or, I would request you, or, I would entreat you, not to fear, not



to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: No, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:—and there indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly, he is Snug the joiner.

*Quin.* Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moon-light into a chamber: for you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moon-light.

*Snug.* Doth the moon shine, that night we play our play?

*Bot.* A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanack; find out moon-shine, find out moon-shine.

*Quin.* Yes, it doth shine that night.

*Bot.* Why, then you may leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

*Quin.* Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say, he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moon-shine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

*Snug.* You never can bring in a wall.—What say you, Bottom?

*Bot.* Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some lome, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; or let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

*Quin.* If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.



*Enter PUCK behind.*

*Puck.* What hempen home-spuns have we swagger-  
ing here,  
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?  
What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor;  
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

*Quin.* Speak, Pyramus:—Thisby, stand forth.

*Pyr.* *Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,—*

*Quin.* Odours, odours.

*Pyr.* ——— odours savours sweet:

*So doth thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.—*

*But, hark, a voice! stay thou but here a while,*

*And by and by I will to thee appear.* [Exit

*Puck.* A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here!

[*Aside.—Exit.*

*This.* Must I speak now?

*Quin.* Ay, marry, must you: for you must under-  
stand, he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is  
to come again.

*This.* *Most radiant Pyramus, most lilly-white of hue,  
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,  
Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,  
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,  
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.*

*Quin.* Ninus' tomb, man: Why you must not speak  
that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all  
your part at once, cues and all.—Pyramus enter; your  
cue is past; it is, never tire.

*Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head.*

*This.* O,—*As true as truest horse, that yet would never  
tire*



*Pyrr.* If I were fair, *Thisby*, I were only thine :—

*Quin.* O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted  
Pray, masters! fly, masters! help! [*Exeunt Clowns*

*Puck.* I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,  
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through  
brier ;

Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,

A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire ;  
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,  
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

[*Exit.*

*Bot.* Why do they run away? this is a knavery of  
them, to make me afraid.

*Re-enter SNOUT.*

*Snout.* O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see  
on thee?

*Bot.* What do you see? you see an ass's head of your  
own, do you?

*Re-enter QUINCE.*

*Quin.* Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art trans-  
lated. [*Exit.*

*Bot.* I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of  
me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir  
from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and  
down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am  
not afraid. [*Sings.*

*The ousel-cock, so black of hue,  
With orange-tawney bill,  
The throstle with his note so true,  
The wren with little quill;*



*Tita.* What angel wakes me from my flowery bed ?  
[*Waking.*

*Bot.* *The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,  
The plain-song cuckoo gray,  
Whose note full many a man doth mark,  
And dares not answer, nay ;—*

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird ?  
who would give a bird the lie, though he cry, *cuckoo*,  
never so ?

*Tita.* I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again :  
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,  
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape ;  
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,  
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

*Bot.* Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that : And yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days : The more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

*Tita.* Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

*Bot.* Not so, neither : but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

*Tita.* Out of this wood do not desire to go ;  
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.  
I am a spirit, of no common rate ;  
The summer still doth tend upon my state,  
And I do love thee : therefore, go with me ;  
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee ;  
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,  
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep :  
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,  
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—



Peas-blossom ! Cobweb ! Moth ! and Mustard-seed !

*Enter four Fairies.*

1 *Fai.* Ready.

2 *Fai.* And I.

3 *Fai.* And I.

4 *Fai.* Where shall we go

*Tita.* Be kind and courteous to this gentleman ;

Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes ;

Feed him with apricocks, and dewberries,

With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries ;

The honey bags steal from the humble-bees,

And, for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,

And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,

To have my love to bed, and to arise ;

And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,

To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes :

No<sup>t</sup> to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

1 *Fai.* Hail, mortal !

2 *Fai.* Hail !

3 *Fai.* Hail !

4 *Fai.* Hail !

*Bot.* I cry your worships' mercy, heartily.—I beseech, your worship's name ?

*Cob.* Cobweb.

*Bot.* I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb : If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.—Your name, honest gentleman ?

*Peas.* Peas-blossom.

*Bot.* I pray you, commend me to mistress Squash, your mother, and to master Peascod, your father. Good master Peas-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too.—Your name, I beseech you, sir ?



*Mus.* Mustard-seed.

*Bot.* Good master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master Mustard-seed.

*Tita.* Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower,  
The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye;  
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,  
Lamenting some enforced chastity.

Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*Another part of the wood.*

*Enter OBERON.*

*Obe.* I wonder, if Titania be awak'd;  
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,  
Which she must dote on in extremity.

*Enter PUCK.*

Here comes my messenger.—How now, mad spirit!  
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

*Puck.* My mistress with a monster is in love.  
Near to her close and consecrated bower,  
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,  
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,  
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,  
Were met together to rehearse a play,  
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.  
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,  
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport



Forsook his scene, and enter d in a brake :  
When I did him at this advantage take,  
An ass's nowl I fixed on his head ;  
Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,  
And forth my mimick comes : When they him spy,  
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,  
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,  
Rising and cawing at the gun's report  
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky ;  
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly :  
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls ;  
He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.  
Their sense, thus weak, lost with their fears, thus  
strong,  
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong :  
For briars and thorns at their apparel snatch ;  
Some, sleeves ; some, hats : from yielders all things  
catch.

I led them on in this distracted fear,  
And left sweet Pyramus translated there :  
When in that moment (so it came to pass)  
Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.

*Obe.* This falls out better than I could devise.  
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes  
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do ?

*Puck.* I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—  
And the Athenian woman by his side ;  
That, when he wak'd, of force she must be ey'd.

*Enter DEMETRIUS and HERMIA.*

*Obe.* Stand close ; this is the same Athenian.

*Puck.* This is the woman, but not this the man.



*Dem.* O, why rebuke you him that loves you so  
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

*Her.* Now I but chide, but I shall use thee worse ;  
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.  
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,  
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,  
And kill me too.

The sun was not so true unto the day,  
As he to me : Would he have stol'n away  
From sleeping Hermia ? I'll believe as soon  
This whole earth may be bor'd ; and that the moon  
May through the center creep, and so displease  
Her brother's noon-tide with the Antipodes.  
It cannot be, but thou hast murder'd him ;  
So should a murderer look ; so dead, so grim.

*Dem.* So should the murder'd look ; and so should I,  
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty :  
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,  
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

*Her.* What's this to my Lysander ? Where is he ?  
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me ?

*Dem.* I had rather give his carcase to my hounds.

*Her.* Out, dog ! out, cur ! thou driv'st me past the  
bounds

Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then ?  
Henceforth be never number'd among men !  
O ! once tell true, tell true, even for my sake ;  
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,  
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping ? O brave touch !  
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much ?

An adder did it ; for with doubler tongue  
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.



*Dem.* You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood:  
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood ;  
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

*Her.* I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

*Dem.* An if I could, what should I get therefore ?

*Her.* A privilege, never to see me more.—  
And from thy hated presence part I so :  
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [Exit.

*Dem.* There is no following her in this fierce vein :  
Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.  
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow  
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe ;  
Which now, in some slight measure it will pay,  
If for his tender here I make some stay. [Lies down.

*Obe.* What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,  
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight :  
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue  
Some true-love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

*Puck.* Then fate o'er-rules ; that, one man holding  
troth,  
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

*Obe.* About the wood go swifter than the wind,  
And Helena of Athens look thou find :  
All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer  
With sighs of love, that cost the fresh blood dear •  
By some illusion see thou bring her here ;  
I'll charm his eyes, against she do appear.

*Puck.* I go, I go ; look, how I go ;  
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. [Exit

*Obe.* Flower of this purple die,  
Hit with Cupid's archery,  
Sink in apple of his eye !  
When his love he doth espy,



Let her shine as gloriously  
As the Venus of the sky.—  
When thou wak'st, if she be by,  
Beg of her for remedy.

*Re-enter PUCK.*

*Puck.* Captain of our fairy band,  
Helena is here at hand ;  
And the youth, mistook by me,  
Pleading for a lover's fee ;  
Shall we their fond pageant see ?  
Lord, what fools these mortals be !

*Obe.* Stand aside : the noise they make,  
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

*Puck.* Then will two at once, woo one ;  
That must needs be sport alone ;  
And those things do best please me,  
That befall preposterously.

*Enter LYSANDER and HELENA.*

*Lys.* Why should you think, that I should woo in  
scorn ?

Scorn and derision never come in tears :  
Look, when I vow, I weep ; and vows so born,  
In their nativity all truth appears.  
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,  
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true ?

*Hel.* You do advance your cunning more and more  
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray !  
These vows are Hermia's ; Will you give her o'er ?

Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh :  
Your vows, to her and me, put in two scales,  
Will even weigh ; and both as light as tales.



*Lys.* I had no judgment, when to her I swore.

*Hel.* Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

*Lys.* Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

*Dem.* [*awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect  
divine!

To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?

Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show

Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!

That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,

Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow,

When thou hold'st up thy hand: O let me kiss

This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

*Hel.* O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent

To set against me, for your merriment.

If you were civil, and knew courtesy,

You would not do me thus much injury.

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,

But you must join, in souls, to mock me too?

If you were men, as men you are in show,

You would not use a gentle lady so;

To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,

When, I am sure, you hate me with your hearts.

You both are rivals, and love Hermia;

And now both rivals, to mock Helena:

A trim exploit, a manly enterprize,

To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes,

With your derision! none, of noble sort,

Would so offend a virgin; and extort

A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

*Lys.* You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;

For you love Hermia; this you know, I know:

And here, with all good will, with all my heart,

In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;



And yours of Helena to me bequeath,  
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

*Hel.* Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

*Dem.* Lysander, keep thy Hermia ; I will none :  
If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.

My heart with her but, as guest-wise, sojourn'd ;  
And now to Helena it is home return'd,  
There to remain.

*Lys.* Helen, it is not so.

*Dem.* Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,  
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.—  
Look, where thy love comes ; yonder is thy dear.

*Enter HERMIA.*

*Her.* Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,  
The ear more quick of apprehension makes ;  
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,  
It pays the hearing double recompense :—  
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found ;  
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.  
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so ?

*Lys.* Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go ?

*Her.* What love could press Lysander from my side ?

*Lys.* Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,  
Fair Helena ; who more engilds the night  
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.  
Why seek'st thou me ? could not this make thee know  
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so ?

*Her.* You speak not as you think ; it cannot be.

*Hel.* Lo, she is one of this confederacy !  
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd, all three,  
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.



Injurious Hermia ! most ungrateful maid !  
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd  
To bait me with this foul derision ?  
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,  
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,  
When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
For parting us,—O, and is all forgot ?  
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence ?  
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
Have with our needs created both one flower,  
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
Both warbling of one song, both in one key ;  
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,  
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted ;  
But yet a union in partition,  
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem :  
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart ;  
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.  
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,  
To join with men in scorning your poor friend ?  
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly ;  
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it ;  
Though I alone do feel the injury.

*Her.* I am amazed at your passionate words :  
I scorn you not ; it seems that you scorn me.

*Hel.* Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,  
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face ?  
And made your other love, Demetrius,  
(Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,)  
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,  
Precious, celestial ? Wherefore speaks he this



To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander  
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,  
And tender me, forsooth, affection;  
But by your setting on, by your consent?  
What though I be not so in grace as you,  
So hung upon with love, so fortunate;  
But miserable most, to love unlov'd?  
This you should pity, rather than despise.

*Her.* I understand not what you mean by this.

*Hel.* Ay, do, perséver, counterfeit sad looks,  
Make mows upon me when I turn my back;  
Wink at each other; hold the sweet jest up:  
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.  
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,  
You would not make me such an argument.  
But, fare ye well: 'tis partly mine own fault;  
Which death, or absence, soon shall remedy.

*Lys.* Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse;  
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

*Hel.* O excellent!

*Her.* Sweet, do not scorn her so.

*Dem.* If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

*Lys.* Thou canst compel no more than she entreat;  
Thy threats have no more strength, than her weak  
prayers.—

Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do;  
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,  
To prove him false, that says I love thee not.

*Dem.* I say, I love thee more than he can do.

*Lys.* If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

*Dem.* Quick, come,—

*Her.* Lysander, whereto tends all this?



*Lys.* Away, you Ethiop !

*Dem.* No, no, sir :—he will  
Seem to break loose ; take on, as you would follow ;  
But yet come not : You are a tame man, go !

*Lys.* Hang off, thou cat, thou burr : vile thing let  
loose ;  
Or I will shake thee from me, like a serpent.

*Her.* Why are you grown so rude ? what change  
is this,  
Sweet love ?

*Lys.* Thy love ? out, tawny Tartar, out !  
Out, loathed medicine ! hated potion, hence !

*Her.* Do you not jest ?

*Hel.* Yes, 'sooth ; and so do you.

*Lys.* Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

*Dem.* I would, I had your bond ; for, I perceive,  
A weak bond holds you ; I'll not trust your word.

*Lys.* What should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead ?  
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

*Her.* What, can you do me greater harm, than hate ?  
Hate me ! wherefore ? O me ! what news, my love ?  
Am not I Hermia ? Are not you Lysander ?  
I am as fair now, as I was erewhile.  
Since night, you lov'd me ; yet since night you left me :  
Why, then you left me,—O, the gods forbid !—  
In earnest, shall I say ?

*Lys.* Ay, by my life ;  
And never did desire to see thee more.  
Therefore, be out of hope, of question, doubt,  
Be certain, nothing truer ; 'tis no jest,  
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

*Her.* O me ! you juggler ! you canker-blossom !  
You thief of love ! what, have you come by night,



And stol'n my love's heart from him ?

*Hel.* Fine, i'faith!

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,  
No touch of bashfulness ? What, will you tear  
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue ?  
Fie, fie ! you counterfeit, you puppet you !

*Her.* Puppet ! why so ? Ay, that way goes the game  
Now I perceive that she hath made compare  
Between our statures, she hath urg'd her height ;  
And with her personage, her tall personage,  
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.—  
And are you grown so high in his esteem,  
Because I am so dwarfish, and so low ?  
How low am I, thou painted maypole ? speak ;  
How low am I ? I am not yet so low,  
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

*Hel.* I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,  
Let her not hurt me : I was never curst ;  
I have no gift at all in shrewishness ;  
I am a right maid for my cowardice ;  
Let her not strike me : You, perhaps, may think,  
Because she's something lower than myself,  
That I can match her.

*Her.* Lower ! hark, again.

*Hel.* Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.  
I evermore did love you, Hermia,  
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you ;  
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,  
I told him of your stealth unto this wood :  
He follow'd you ; for love, I follow'd him.  
But he hath chid me hence ; and threaten'd me  
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too :  
And now, so you will let me quiet go,



To Athens will I bear my folly back,  
And follow you no further : Let me go :  
You see how simple and how fond I am.

*Her.* Why, get you gone : Who is't that hinders you ?

*Hel.* A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

*Her.* What, with Lysander ?

*Hel.* With Demetrius.

*Lys.* Be not afraid : she shall not harm thee, Helena.

*Dem.* No, sir ; she shall not, though you take her  
part.

*Hel.* O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd :  
She was a vixen, when she went to school ;  
And, though she be but little, she is fierce.

*Her.* Little again ? nothing but low and little ;  
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus ?  
Let me come to her.

*Lys.* Get you gone, you dwarf ;  
You minimus, of hind'ring knot-grass made ;  
You bead, you acorn.

*Dem.* You are too officious,  
In her behalf that scorns your services.  
Let her alone ; speak not of Helena ;  
Take not her part : for if thou dost intend  
Never so little show of love to her,  
Thou shalt aby it.

*Lys.* Now she holds me not ;  
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,  
Or thine or mine, is most in Helena.

*Dem.* Follow ? nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

[*Exeunt Lys. and Dem.*]

*Her.* You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you :  
Nay, go not back.

*Hel.* I will not trust you, I.



Nor longer stay in your curst company.  
Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray ;  
My legs are longer though, to run away. [Eri.

Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.

[Exit pursuing HELENA.

Obe. This is thy negligence : still thou mistak'st,  
Or else commit'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook  
Did not you tell me, I should know the man  
By the Athenian garments he had on ?  
And so far blameless proves my enterprize,  
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes :  
And so far am I glad it so did sort,  
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou seest, these lovers seek a place to fight  
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night ;  
The starry welkin cover thou anon  
With drooping fog, as black as Acheron ;  
And lead these testy rivals so astray,  
As one come not within another's way.  
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,  
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong ;  
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius ;  
And from each other look thou lead them thus  
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep  
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep :  
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye ;  
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,  
To take from thence all error, with his might,  
And make his eye-balls roll with wonted sight.  
When they next wake, all this derision  
Shall seem a dream, and fruitless vision ;



And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,  
With league, whose date till death shall never end.  
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,  
I'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy;  
And then I will her charmed eye release  
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

*Puck.* My fairy lord, this must be done with haste;  
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,  
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;  
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,  
Troop home to church-yards: damned spirits all,  
That in cross-ways and floods have burial,  
Already to their wormy beds are gone;  
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,  
They wilfully themselves exile from light,  
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

*Obe.* But we are spirits of another sort:  
I with the morning's love have oft made sport;  
And, like a forester, the groves may tread,  
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,  
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,  
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.  
But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:  
We may effect this business yet ere day. [*Exit OBERON*

*Puck.* Up and down, up and down;  
I will lead them up and down:  
I am fear'd in field and town:  
Goblin, lead them up and down.  
Here comes one.

*Enter LYSANDER.*

*Lys.* Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

*Puck.* Here, villain! drawn and ready. Where art thou?



*Lys.* I will be with thee straight.

*Puck.* Follow me then  
To plainer ground. [*Exit Lys. as following the voice*

*Enter DEMETRIUS.*

*Dem.* Lysander! speak again.  
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?  
Speak. In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

*Puck.* Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,  
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,  
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child;  
I'll whip thee with a rod: He is defil'd,  
That draws a sword on thee.

*Dem.* Yea, art thou there?

*Puck.* Follow my voice; we'll try no manhood here  
[*Exeunt*

*Re-enter LYSANDER.*

*Lys.* He goes before me, and still dares me on;  
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.  
The villain is much lighter heel'd than I:  
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;  
That fall'n am I in dark uneven way,  
And here will rest me. Come thou, gentle day! [*Lies down.*  
For if but once thou shew me thy grey light,  
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spite. [*Sleeps.*

*Re-enter PUCK and DEMETRIUS.*

*Puck.* Ho, ho! ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou not?

*Dem.* Abide me, if thou dar'st; for well I wot,  
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place;  
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.  
Where art thou?



*Puck.* Come hither ; I am here.

*Dem.* Nay, then thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy  
this dear,

If ever I thy face by day-light see :

Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me

To measure out my length on this cold bed.—

By day's approach look to be visited.

[*Lies down and sleeps*

*Enter HELENA.*

*Hel.* O weary night, O long and tedious night,

Abate thy hours : shine, comforts, from the east :

That I may back to Athens, by day-light,

From these that my poor company detest :—

And, sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,

Steal me a while from mine own company. [*Sleeps*

*Puck.* Yet but three ? Come one more ;

Two of both kinds makes up four.

Here she comes, curst and sad :—

Cupid is a knavish lad,

Thus to make poor females mad.

*Enter HERMIA.*

*Her.* Never so weary, never so in woe,

Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers ;

I can no further crawl, no further go ;

My legs can keep no pace with my desires.

Here will I rest me, till the break of day.

Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray !

[*Lies down.*

*Puck.* On the ground

Sleep sound :



I'll apply  
To your eye,  
Gentle lover, remedy.

[*Squeezing the juice on* **LYSANDER's eye.**

When thou wak'st,  
Thou tak'st  
True delight  
In the sight

Of thy former lady's eye :  
And the country proverb known,  
That every man shall take his own,  
In your waking shall be shown :

Jack shall have Jill ;  
Nought shall go ill ;

The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

[*Exit* **PUCK.**—**DEM. HEL. &c. sleep.**

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## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*The same.*

*Enter* **TITANIA** and **BOTTOM**, Fairies attending ;

**OBERON** behind unseen.

*Tita.* Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,  
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,  
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,  
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.



*Bot.* Where's Peas-blossom?

*Peas.* Ready.

*Bot.* Scratch my head, Peas-blossom.—Where's monsieur Cobweb?

*Cob.* Ready.

*Bot.* Monsieur Cobweb; good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loath to have you over-flown with a honey-bag, signior.—Where's monsieur Mustard-seed?

*Must.* Ready.

*Bot.* Give me your neif, monsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.

*Must.* What's your will?

*Bot.* Nothing, good monsieur, but to help cavalero Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for, methinks, I am marvellous hairy about the face: and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

*Tita.* What, wilt thou hear some musick, my sweet love?

*Bot.* I have a reasonable good ear in musick: let us have the tongs and the bones.

*Tita.* Or, say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

*Bot.* Truly, a peck of provender; I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks, I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

*Tita.* I have a venturous fairy that shall seek  
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts



*Bot.* I had rather have a handful, or two, of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

*Tita.* Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms. Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away.

So doth the woodbine, the sweet honeysuckle,  
Gently entwist,—the female ivy so  
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.

O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! [*They sleep*

*OBERON advances. Enter PUCK.*

*Obe.* Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight?

Her dotage now I do begin to pity.  
For meeting her of late, behind the wood,  
Seeking sweet savours for this hateful fool,  
I did upbraid her, and fall out with her:  
For she his hairy temples then had rounded  
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;  
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds  
Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,  
Stood now within the pretty flourets' eyes,  
Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.  
When I had, at my pleasure, taunted her,  
And she, in mild terms, begg'd my patience,  
I then did ask of her her changeling child;  
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent  
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.  
And now I have the boy, I will undo  
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.  
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp  
From off the head of this Athenian swain;  
That he awaking when the other do,



May all to Athens back again repair ;  
And think no more of this night's accidents,  
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.  
But first I will release the fairy queen.

Be, as thou wast wont to be ;  
[*Touching her eyes with an herb.*]

See, as thou was wont to see :  
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower  
Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania ; wake you, my sweet queen.

*Tita.* My Oberon ! what visions have I seen !  
Methought, I was enamour'd of an ass.

*Obe.* There lies your love.

*Tita.* How came these things to pass ?  
O, how mine eyes do loath his visage now !

*Obe.* Silence, a while.—Robin, take off this head.—  
Titania, musick call ; and strike more dead  
Than common sleep, of all these five the sense.

*Tita.* Musick, ho ! musick ; such as charmeth sleep.

*Puck.* Now, when thou wa'kst, with thine own fool's  
eyes peep.

*Obe.* Sound, musick. [*Still musick.*] Come, my queen,  
take hands with me,

And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Now thou and I are new in amity ;

And will, to-morrow midnight, solemnly,

Dance in duke Theseus' house triumphantly,

And bless it to all fair posterity :

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be

Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

*Puck.* Fairy king, attend, and mark ;

I do hear the morning lark.



*Obe.* Then, my queen, in silence sad,  
Trip we after the night's shade.  
We the globe can compass soon,  
Swifter than the wand'ring moon.

*Tita.* Come, my lord ; and in our flight,  
Tell me how it came this night,  
That I sleeping here was found,  
With these mortals, on the ground. [*Exeunt*  
[*Horns sound within*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, and train.*

*The.* Go, one of you, find out the forester ;—  
For now our observation is perform'd :  
And since we have the vaward of the day,  
My love shall hear the musick of my hounds.—  
Uncouple in the western valley ; go :—  
Despatch, I say, and find the forester.—  
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,  
And mark the musical confusion  
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

*Hip.* I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once,  
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear  
With hounds of Sparta : never did I hear  
Such gallant chiding ; for, besides the groves,  
The skies, the fountains, every region near  
Seem'd all one mutual cry : I never heard  
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

*The.* My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
So flew'd, so sanded ; and their heads are hung  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew ;  
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lap'd like Thessalian bulls ;  
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tuneable



Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,  
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly :  
Judge, when you hear.—But, soft ; what nymphs are  
these ?

*Ege.* My lord, this is my daughter here asleep ;  
And this, Lysander ; this Demetrius is ;  
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena :  
I wonder of their being here together.

*The.* No doubt, they rose up early, to observe  
The rite of May ; and, hearing our intent,  
Came here in grace of our solemnity.—  
But, speak, Egeus ; is not this the day  
That Hermia should give answer of her choice ?

*Ege.* It is, my lord.

*The.* Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their  
horns.

*Horns, and shout within.* DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER, HER  
MIA, and HELENA, wake and start up.

*The.* Good-morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past ;  
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now ?

*Lys.* Pardon, my lord.

[*He and the rest kneel to THESEUS.*

*The.* I pray you all, stand up.  
I know, you are two rival enemies ;  
How comes this gentle concord in the world,  
That hatred is so far from jealousy,  
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity ?

*Lys.* My lord, I shall reply amazedly,  
Half 'sleep, half waking : But as yet, I swear,  
I cannot truly say how I came here :  
But, as I think, (for truly would I speak,—  
And now I do bethink me, so it is ;)



I came with Hermia hither ; our intent  
Was, to be gone from Athens, where we might be  
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

*Ege.* Enough, enough, my lord ; you have enough :  
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.—

They would have stol'n away, they would, Demetrius,  
Thereby to have defeated you and me :  
You, of your wife ; and me, of my consent ;  
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

*Dem.* My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,  
Of this their purpose hither, to this wood ;  
And I in fury hither follow'd them ;  
Fair Helena in fancy following me.  
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,  
(But by some power it is,) my love to Hermia,  
Melted as doth the snow, seems to me now  
As the remembrance of an idle gawd,  
Which in my childhood I did dote upon :  
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,  
The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,  
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,  
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia :  
But, like in sickness, did I loath this food :  
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,  
Now do I wish it, love it, long for it,  
And will for ever more be true to it.

*The.* Fair lovers, you are fortunately met :  
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.—  
Egeus, I will overbear your will ;  
For in the temple, by and by with us,  
These couples shall eternally be knit.  
And, for the morning now is something worn,  
Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.—



Away, with us, to Athens : Three and three,  
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.—  
Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt* THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, and train.

*Dem.* These things seem small, and undistinguishable,  
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

*Her.* Methinks, I see these things with parted eye,  
When every thing seems double.

*Hel.* So methinks :

And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,  
Mine own, and not mine own.

*Dem.* It seems to me,  
That yet we sleep, we dream.—Do not you think,  
The duke was here, and bid us follow him ?

*Her.* Yea ; and my father.

*Hel.* And Hippolyta.

*Lys.* And he did bid us follow to the temple.

*Dem.* Why then, we are awake : let's follow him ;  
And, by the way, let us recount our dreams. [*Exeunt*

*As they go out, BOTTOM awakes.*

*Bot.* When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer :  
—my next is, *Most fair Pyramus*.—Hey, ho !—Peter  
Quince ! Flute, the bellows-mender ! Snout, the tinker !  
Starveling ! God's my life ! stolen hence, and left me  
asleep ! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a  
dream,—past the wit of man to say what dream it was :  
Man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream.  
Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Me-  
thought I was, and methought I had,—But man is but  
a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought  
I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man  
hath not seen ; man's hand is not able to taste, his



tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream : it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom ; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke : Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Athens. *A room in Quince's house.*

*Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING.*

*Quin.* Have you sent to Bottom's house ? is he come home yet ?

*Star.* He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt, he is transported.

*Flu.* If he come not, then the play is marred ; It goes not forward, doth it ?

*Quin.* It is not possible : you have not a man in all Athens, able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

*Flu.* No ; he hath simply the best wit of any handy-craft man in Athens.

*Quin.* Yea, and the best person too : and he is a very paramour, for a sweet voice.

*Flu.* You must say, paragon : a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of nought.

*Enter SNUG.*

*Snug.* Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married : if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

*Flu.* O sweet bully Bottom ! Thus hath he lost sixpence a-day during his life ; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a-day · an the duke had not given him sixpence



a-day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged ; he would have deserved it : sixpence a-day, in Pyramus, or nothing.

*Enter BOTTOM.*

*Bot.* Where are these lads ? Where are these hearts ?

*Quin.* Bottom !—O most courageous day ! O most happy hour !

*Bot.* Masters, I am to discourse wonders : but ask me not what ; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

*Quin.* Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

*Bot.* Not a word of me. All that I will tell you, is, that the duke hath dined : Get your apparel together ; good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps ; meet presently at the palace ; every man look o'er his part ; for, the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen ; and let not him, that plays the lion, pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions, nor garlick, for we are to utter sweet breath ; and I do not doubt, but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words ; away ; go, away.

*[Exeunt]*



## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The same. An apartment in the palace of Theseus.*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, Lords, and Attendants.*

*Hip.* 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

*The.* More strange than true. I never may believe These antique fables, nor these fairy toys. Lovers, and madmen, have such seething brains, Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend More than cool reason ever comprehends. The lunatick, the lover, and the poet, Are of imagination all compact : One sees more devils than vast hell can hold ; That is, the madman : the lover, all as frantick, Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt : The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling, Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ; And, as imagination bodies forth The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing A local habitation, and a name. Such tricks hath strong imagination ; That, if it would but apprehend some joy, It comprehends some bringer of that joy ;



Or, in the night, imagining some fear,  
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear?

*Hip.* But all the story of the night told over,  
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,  
More witnesseth than fancy's images,  
And grows to something of great constancy;  
But, howsoever, strange, and admirable.

*Enter* LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, and HELENA.

*The.* Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.—  
Joy, gentle friends! joy, and fresh days of love,  
Accompany your hearts!

*Lys.* More than to us  
Wait on your royal walks, your board, your bed!

*The.* Come now; what masks, what dances shall we  
have,  
To wear away this long age of three hours,  
Between our after-supper, and bed-time?  
Where is our usual manager of mirth?  
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,  
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?  
Call Philostrate.

*Philost.* Here, mighty Theseus.

*The.* Say, what abridgment have you for this evening?  
What mask? what musick? How shall we beguile  
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

*Philost.* There is a brief, how many sports are ripe,  
Make choice of which your highness will see first.

[Giving a paper.

*The. reads.]* The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung,  
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.

We'll none of that: that have I told my love,



In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

*The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,*

*Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.*

That is an old device ; and it was play'd

When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

*The thrice three Muses mourning for the death*

*Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary.*

That is some satire, keen, and critical,

Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

*A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus,*

*And his love Thisbe ; very tragical mirth.*

Merry and tragical ? Tedious and brief ?

That is, hot ice, and wonderous strange snow.

How shall we find the concord of this discord ?

*Philost.* A play there is, my lord, some ten words long ;

Which is as brief as I have known a play ;

But by ten words, my lord, it is too long ;

Which makes it tedious : for in all the play

There is not one word apt, one player fitted.

And tragical, my noble lord, it is ;

For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.

Which, when I saw rehears'd, I must confess,

Made mine eyes water : but more merry tears

The passion of loud laughter never shed.

*The.* What are they, that do play it ?

*Philost.* Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here

Which never labour'd in their minds till now ;

And now have toil'd their unbreath'd memories

With this same play, against your nuptial.

*The.* And we will hear it.

*Philost.* No, my noble lord,

It is not for you : I have heard it over,

And it is nothing, nothing in the world ;



Unless you can find sport in their intents,  
Extremely stretch'd, and conn'd with cruel pain,  
To do you service.

*The.* I will hear that play :  
For never any thing can be amiss,  
When simpleness and duty tender it.  
Go, bring them in ;—and take your places, ladies.

[Exit PHILOSTRATE

*Hip.* I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,  
And duty in his service perishing.

*The.* Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing

*Hip.* He says, they can do nothing in this kind.

*The.* The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.  
Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake :  
And what poor duty cannot do,  
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.  
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed  
To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;  
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
Make periods in the midst of sentences,  
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,  
And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,  
Not paying me a welcome : Trust me, sweet,  
Out of this silence, yet, I pick'd a welcome ;  
And in the modesty of fearful duty  
I read as much, as from the rattling tongue  
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.  
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,  
In least, speak most, to my capacity.

*Enter PHILOSTRATE.*

*Philost.* So please your grace, the prologue is addrest.

*The.* Let him approach. [Flourish of trumpets.



*Enter Prologue.*

*Prol.* *If we offend, it is with our good will.  
That you should think, we come not to offend,  
But with good-will. To shew our simple skill,  
That is the true beginning of our end.  
Consider then, we come but in despite.*

*We do not come as minding to content you,  
Our true intent is. All for your delight,  
We are not here. That you should here repent you,  
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,  
You shall know all, that you are like to know.*

*The.* This fellow doth not stand upon points.

*Lys.* He hath rid his prologue, like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: It is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

*Hip.* Indeed he hath played on this prologue, like a child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

*The.* His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

*Enter PYRAMUS and THISBE, Wall, Moonshine, and  
Lion, as in dumb show.*

*Prol.* “Gentles, perchance, you wonder at this show;  
“But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.  
“This man is Pyramus, if you would know;  
“This beauteous lady Thisby is, certain.  
“This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present  
“Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder:  
“And through wall’s chink, poor souls, they are content  
“To whisper; at the which let no man wonder.



‘ This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,  
“ Presenteth moon-shine : for, if you will know,  
“ By moon-shine did these lovers think no scorn  
“ To meet at Ninus’ tomb, there, there so woo.  
“ This grisly beast, which by name lion hight,  
“ The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,  
“ Did scare away, or rather did affright :  
“ And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall ;  
“ Which lion vile with bloody mouth did stain ;  
“ Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and call,  
“ And finds his trusty Thisby’s mantle slain :  
“ Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,  
“ He bravely broach’d his boiling bloody breast ;  
“ And, Thisby tarrying in mulberry shade,  
“ His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,  
“ Let, lion, moon-shine, wall, and lovers twain,  
“ At large discourse, while here they do remain.”

[*Exeunt* Prol. THISBE, Lion, and Moonshine

*The.* I wonder, if the lion be to speak.

*Dem.* No wonder, my lord ; one lion may, when many asses do.

*Wall.* “ In this same interlude, it doth befall,  
“ That I, one Snout by name, present a wall :  
“ And such a wall, as I would have you think,  
“ That had in it a cranny’d hole, or chink,  
“ Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,  
“ Did whisper often very secretly.  
“ This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone, doth show  
“ That I am that same wall ; the truth is so :  
“ And this the cranny is, right and sinister,  
“ Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.”

*The.* Would you desire lime and hair to speak better ,



*Dem.* It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

*The.* Pyramus draws near the wall : silence !

*Enter PYRAMUS.*

*Pyr.* “ O grim-look’d night ! O night with hue so black !

“ O night, which ever art, when day is not !

“ O night, O night, alack, alack, alack,

“ I fear my Thisby’s promise is forgot !—

“ And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,

“ That stand’st between her father’s ground and mine;

“ Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,

“ Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne. [Wall holds up his fingers.

“ Thanks, courteous wall : Jove shield thee well for this !

“ But what see I ? No Thisby do I see.

“ O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss ;

“ Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me !”

*The.* The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

*Pyr.* No, in truth, sir, he should not. *Deceiving me,* is Thisby’s cue : she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you :—Yonder she comes.

*Enter THISBE.*

*This.* “ O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans

“ For parting my fair Pyramus and me :

“ My cherry lips have often kiss’d thy stones ;

“ Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.”

*Pyr.* “ I see a voice : now will I to the chink,



"To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.

"Thisby!"

*This.* "My love! thou art my love, I think."

*Pyr.* "Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;

"And like Iimander am I trusty still."

*This.* "And I like Helen, till the fates me kill."

*Pyr.* "Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true."

*This.* "As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you."

*Pyr.* "O, kiss me through the hole of this vile wall."

*This.* "I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all."

*Pyr.* "Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straight-way?"

*This.* "Tide life, tide death, I come without delay."

*Wall.* "Thus have I, wall, my part discharged so;

"And, being done, thus wall away doth go."

[*Exeunt Wall, PYRAMUS, and THISBE.*

*The.* Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

*Dem.* No, remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

*Hip.* This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

*The.* The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

*Hip.* It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

*The.* If we imagine no worse of them, than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a moon and a lion.

*Enter Lion and Moonshine.*

*Lion.* "You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts no fear

"The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,

"May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,

"When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar."



‘ Then know, that I, one Snug the joiner, am  
“ A lion fell, nor else no lion’s dam :  
“ For if I should as lion come in strife  
“ Into this place, ’twere pity on my life.”

*The.* A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

*Dem.* The very best at a beast, my lord, that e’er  
I saw.

*Lys.* This lion is a very fox for his valour.

*The.* True ; and a goose for his discretion.

*Dem.* Not so, my lord : for his valour cannot carry  
his discretion ; and the fox carries the goose.

*The.* His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his  
valour ; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well : leave  
it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

*Moon.* “ This lantern doth the horned moon pre-  
sent :”

*Dem.* He should have worn the horns on his head.

*The.* He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible  
within the circumference.

*Moon.* “ This lantern doth the horned moon present ;  
‘ Myself the man ’ith’moon do seem to be.”

*The.* This is the greatest error of all the rest : the  
man should be put into the lantern : How is it else the  
man i’t’h’moon ?

*Dem.* He dares not come there for the candle : for,  
you see, it is already in snuff.

*Hip.* I am aweary of this moon : Would, he would  
change !

*The.* It appears, by his small light of discretion, that  
he is in the wane : but yet, in courtesy, in all reason,  
we must stay the time.

*Lys.* Proceed, moon

*Moon.* All that I have to say, is, to tell you, that the



lantern is the moon ; I, the man in the moon ; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush ; and this dog, my dog.

*Dem.* Why, all these should be in the lantern ; for they are in the moon. But, silence ; here comes Thisbe.

*Enter THISBE.*

*This.* " This is old Ninny's tomb : Where is my love ? "

*Lion.* " Oh—." [*The Lion roars.—THISBE runs off.*]

*Dem.* Well roared, lion.

*The.* Well run, Thisbe.

*Hip.* Well shone, moon.—Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

*The.* Well moused, lion.

[*The Lion tears THISBE's mantle, and exit.*]

*Dem.* And so comes Pyramus.

*Lys.* And then the moon vanishes.

*Enter PYRAMUS.*

*Pyr.* " Sweet moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams ;

" I thank thee, moon for shining now so bright :

" For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering streams,

" I trust to taste of truest Thisby's sight.

" But stay ;—O spite !

" But mark ;—Poor knight,

" What dreadful dole is here ?

" Eyes, do you see ?

" How can it be ?

" O dainty duck ! O dear !

" Thy mantle good,

" What, stain'd with blood ?

" Approach, ye furies fell !

" O fates ! come, come ;

" Cut thread and thrum ;

" Quail, crush, conclude, and quell ! "



*The.* This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

*Hip.* Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

*Pyr.* "O, wherefore, nature, didst thou lions frame :

"Since lion vile hath here deflour'd my dear :

"Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame,

"That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with cheer

"Come, tears, confound ;

"Out, sword, and wound

"The pap of Pyramus :

"Ay, that left pap,

"Where heart doth hop :—

"Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

"Now am I dead,

"Now am I fled ;

"My soul is in the sky :

"Tongue, lose thy light !

"Moon, take thy flight !

"Now die, die, die, die, die.

[*Dies.*—*Exit Moonshine*

*Dem.* No die, but an ace, for him ; for he is but one.

*Lys.* Less than an ace, man ; for he is dead ; he is nothing.

*The.* With the help of a surgeon, he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

*Hip.* How chance moonshine is gone, before *Thisbe* comes back and finds her lover ?

*The.* She will find him by star-light.—Here she comes ; and her passion ends the play.

*Enter THISBE.*

*Hip.* Methinks, she should not use a long one, for such a *Pyramus* : I hope, she will be brief.



*Dem.* A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better.

*Lys.* She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

*Dem.* And thus she moans, *videlicet*.——

*This.* “Asleep, my love?

“What, dead, my dove?

“O Pyramus, arise,

“Speak, speak. Quite dumb?

“Dead, dead? A tomb

“Must cover thy sweet eyes.

“These lily brows,

“This cherry nose,

“These yellow cowslip cheeks,

“Are gone, are gone:

“Lovers, make moan!

“His eyes were green as leeks.

“O sisters three,

“Come, come, to me,

“With hands as pale as milk;

“Lay them in gore,

“Since you have shore

“With shears his thread of silk.

“Tongue, not a word:—

“Come, trusty sword;

“Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

“And farewell, friends;—

“Thus Thisbe ends:

“Adieu, adieu, adieu.”

[*Dies.*

*The.* Moonshine and lion are left to bury the dead.

*Dem.* Ay, and wall too.

*Bot.* No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted



their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance, between two of our company?

*The.* No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it, had play'd Pyramus, and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone.

[*Here a dance of Clowns.*

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:—  
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.  
I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn,  
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.  
This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd  
The heavy gait of night.—Sweet friends, to bed.—  
A fortnight hold we this solemnity,  
In nightly revels, and new jollity.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*Enter PUCK.*

*Puck.* Now the hungry lion roars,  
And the wolf behowls the moon;  
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,  
All with weary task fordone.  
Now the wasted brands do glow,  
Whilst the scritch-owl, scritch'ing loud,  
Puts the wretch, that lies in woe,  
In remembrance of a shroud.



Now it is the time of night,  
That the graves, all gaping wide,  
Every one lets forth his sprite,  
In the church-way paths to glide:  
And we fairies, that do run  
By the triple Hecat's team,  
From the presence of the sun,  
Following darkness like a dream,  
Now are frolick; not a mouse  
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:  
I am sent, with broom, before,  
To sweep the dust behind the door.

*Enter OBERON and TITANIA, with their train.*

*Obe.* Through this house give glimmering light,  
By the dead and drowsy fire:  
Every elf, and fairy sprite,  
Hop as light as bird from brier;  
And this ditty, after me,  
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

*Tita.* First, rehearse this song by rote:  
To each word a warbling note,  
Hand to hand, with fairy grace,  
Will we sing, and bless this place.

SONG, AND DANCE.

*Obe.* Now, until the break of day,  
Through this house each fairy stray.  
To the best bride-bed will we,  
Which by us shall blessed be;



And the issue, there create,  
Ever shall be fortunate.  
So shall all the couples **three**  
Ever true in loving be :  
And the blots of nature's hand  
Shall not in their issue stand ;  
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,  
Nor mark prodigious, such as are  
Despised in nativity,  
Shall upon their children be.—  
With this field-dew consecrate,  
Every fairy take his gait ;  
And each several chamber bless,  
Through this palace with sweet peace :  
E'er shall it in safety rest,  
And the owner of it blest.

Trip away ;

Make no stay ;

Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt OBERON, TITANIA, and tra*

**Puck.** *If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, (and all is mended,)  
That you have but slumber'd here,  
While these visions did appear.  
And this weak and idle theme,  
No more yielding but a dream,  
Gentles, do not reprehend ;  
If you pardon, we will mend.  
And, as I'm an honest Puck,  
If we have unearned luck  
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,  
We will make amends, ere long :*



*Else the Puck a liar call.  
So, good night unto you all.  
Give me your hands, if we be friends,  
And Robin shall restore amends.*

**[Exit.]**

MERRY WIVES

OF  
WINDSOR







# MERRY WIVES

## OF



MERRY WIVES

OF

WINDSOR.



MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.] A few of the incidents in this comedy might have been taken from an old translation of *Il Pecorone* by Giovanni Fiorentino. I have lately met with the same story in a very contemptible performance, intitled, *The fortunate, the deceived, and the unfortunate Lovers*. Of this book, as I am told, there are several impressions; but that in which I read it was published in 1632, quarto. A somewhat similar story occurs in *Piacevoli Notti di Straparola*, Nott. 4<sup>a</sup>. Fav. 4<sup>a</sup>.

This comedy was first entered at Stationers' Hall, Jan. 18, 1601, by John Busby. STEEVENS.

This play should be read between *K. Henry IV.* and *K. Henry V.* JOHNSON.

A passage in the first sketch of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* shews, I think, that it ought rather to be read between *The First* and *The Second Part of King Henry IV.* in the latter of which young Henry becomes king. In the last act, Falstaff says :

"Herne the hunter, quoth you? am I a ghost?"

"'Sblood, the fairies hath made a ghost of me."

"What, hunting at this time of night!"

"I'll lay my life the mad prince of Wales

"Is stealing his father's deare."

and in this play, as it now appears, Mr. Page discountenances the addresses of Fenton to his daughter, because "he keeps company with the wild prince, and with Poins."

*The Fishwife's Tale of Brainford* in WESTWARD FOR SMELTS, a book which Shakespeare appears to have read, (having borrowed from it a part of the fable of *Cymbeline*,) probably led him to lay the scene of Falstaff's love adventures at *Windsor*. It begins thus: "In *Windsor* not long agoe dwelt a sumpter-man, who had to wife a very faire but wanton creature, over whom, not without cause, he was something jealous; yet had he never any proof of her inconstancy."

The reader who is curious in such matters may find the story of *The Lovers of Pisa*, mentioned by Dr. Farmer in the following note, at the end of this play. MALONE.

The adventures of *Falstaff* in this play seem to have been



taken from the story of *The Lovers of Pisa*, in an old piece, called *Tarleton's News out of Purgatorie*. Mr. Capell pretended to much knowledge of this sort; and I am sorry that it proved to be only pretension.

Mr. *Warton* observes, in a note to the last *Oxford* edition, that the play was probably not written, as we now have it, before 1607, at the earliest. I agree with my very ingenious friend in this supposition, but yet the argument here produced for it may not be conclusive. *Slender* observes to master *Page*, that his greyhound was out-run on *Cotsale* [*Cotswold-Hills* in *Gloucestershire*]; and Mr. *Warton* thinks, that the games, established there by Captain *Dover* in the beginning of *K. James's* reign, are alluded to. But, perhaps, though the Captain be celebrated in the *Annalia Dubrensis* as the founder of them, he might be the reviver only, or some way contribute to make them more famous; for in *The Second Part of Henry IV.* 1600, Justice *Shallow* reckons among the *Swinge-bucklers*, "*Will Squeele, a Cotsole man.*"

In the first edition of the imperfect play, *Sir Hugh Evans* is called on the title-page, the *Welch Knight*; and yet there are some persons who still affect to believe, that all our author's plays were originally published by himself.

FARMER.

Dr. Farmer's opinion is well supported by "An Eclogue on the noble Assemblies revived on Cotswold Hills, by Mr. Robert Dover." See Randolph's Poems, printed at Oxford, 4to. 1638, p. 114. The hills of *Cotswold*, in *Gloucestershire*, are mentioned in *K. Richard II.* Act II. sc. iii. and by Drayton, in his *Polyolbion*, song 14. STEEVENS.

Queen Elizabeth was so well pleased with the admirable character of Falstaff in *The Two Parts of Henry IV.* that, as Mr. Rowe informs us, she commanded Shakespeare to continue it for one play more, and to shew him in love. To this command we owe *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; which, Mr. Gildon says, [*Remarks on Shakespeare's Plays*, 8vo. 1710,] he was very well assured our author finished in a fortnight. But this must be meant only of the first imperfect sketch of this comedy. An old quarto edition which I have seen, printed in 1602, says, in the title-



page,—*As it hath been divers times acted before her majesty, and elsewhere.* This, which we have here, was altered and improved by the author almost in every speech.

POPE. THEOBALD.

Mr. Gildon has likewise told us, “that our author’s house at Stratford bordered on the Church-yard, and that he wrote the scene of the Ghost in *Hamlet* there.” But neither for this, or the assertion that the play before us was written in a fortnight, does he quote any authority. The latter circumstance was first mentioned by Mr. Dennis. “This comedy,” says he, in his Epistle Dedicatory to *The Comical Gallant*, (an alteration of the present play,) 1702, “was written at her [Queen Elizabeth’s] command, and by her direction, and she was so eager to see it acted, that she commanded it to be finished in *fourteen days*; and was afterwards, as tradition tells us, very well pleased at the representation.” The information, it is probable, came originally from Dryden, who from his intimacy with Sir William Davenant had an opportunity of learning many particulars concerning our author.

At what period Shakespeare new-modelled *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is unknown. I believe it was enlarged in 1603. See some conjectures on the subject in the *Attempt to ascertain the Order of his Plays*, Vol II. MALONE.

It is not generally known, that the first edition of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, in its present state, is in the valuable folio, printed 1623, from whence the quarto of the same play, dated 1630, was evidently copied. The two earlier quartos, 1602 and 1619, only exhibit this comedy as it was originally written, and are so far curious, as they contain Shakespeare’s first conceptions in forming a drama, which is the most complete specimen of his comick powers. T. WARTON.



**PERSONS REPRESENTED.**

~~~~~

**Sir JOHN FALSTAFF.**

**FENTON.**

**SHALLOW, a country Justice.**

**SLENDER, cousin to Shallow.**

**Mr. FORD, } two gentlemen dwelling at Windsor.**  
**Mr. PAGE, }**

**WILLIAM PAGE, a boy, son to Mr. Page.**

**Sir HUGH EVANS, a Welch parson.**

**Dr. CAIUS, a French physician.**

**Host of the Garter Inn.**

**BARDOLPH, } followers of Falstaff.**  
**PISTOL, }**  
**NYM, }**

**ROBIN, page to Falstaff.**

**SIMPLE, servant to Slender.**

**RUGBY, servant to Dr. Caius.**

**Mrs. FORD.**

**Mrs. PAGE.**

**Mrs. ANNE PAGE, her daughter, in love with Fenton.**

**Mrs. QUICKLY, servant to Dr. Caius.**

*Servants to Page, Ford, &c.*

**SCENE—Windsor; and the parts adjacent.**



# MERRY WIVES

OF

## WINDSOR

### ACT I.

SCENE I.—Windsor. *Before Page's House.*

*Enter Justice SHALLOW, SLENDER, and Sir HUGH EVANS.*

*Shal.* Sir Hugh, persuade me not; I will make a Star-chamber matter of it: if he were twenty sir John Falstaff's, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

*Slen.* In the county of Gloster, justice of peace, and *coram.*

*Shal.* Ay, cousin Slender, and *Cust-alorum.*

*Slen.* Ay, and *ratolorum* too; and a gentleman born, master parson; who writes himself *armigero*; in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, *armigero.*

*Shal.* Ay, that we do; and have done any time these three hundred years.

*Slen.* All his successors, gone before him, have done't; and all his ancestors, that come after him, may: they may give the dozen white luces in their coat.



*Shal.* It is an old coat.

*Eva.* The dozen white louses do become an old coat well ; it agrees well, passant : it is a familiar beast to man, and signifies—love.

*Shal.* The luce is the fresh fish ; the salt fish is an old coat.

*Slen.* I may quarter, coz ?

*Shal.* You may, by marrying.

*Eva.* It is marring, indeed, if he quarter it.

*Shal.* Not a whit.

*Eva.* Yes, py'r-lady ; if he has a quarter of your coat, there is but three skirts for yourself, in my simple conjectures : but this is all one : If sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I am of the church, and will be glad to do my benevolence, to make atonements and compromises between you.

*Shal.* The Council shall hear it ; it is a riot.

*Eva.* It is not meet the Council hear a riot ; there is no fear of Got in a riot : the Council, look you, shall desire to hear the fear of Got, and not to hear a riot ; take your vizaments in that.

*Shal.* Ha ! o' my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it.

*Eva.* It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it : and there is also another device in my prain, which, peradventure, brings goot discretions with it : There is Anne Page, which is daughter to master George Page, which is pretty virginity.

*Slen.* Mistress Anne Page ? She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

*Eva.* It is that fery verson for all the 'orld, as just as you will desire ; and seven hundred pounds of monies, and gold, and silver, is her grandsire, upon his death's-



bed, (Got deliver to a joyful resurrections!) give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old: it were a goot motion, if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between master Abraham, and mistress Anne Page.

*Shal.* Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pound?

*Eva.* Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

*Shal.* I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

*Eva.* Seven hundred pounds, and possibilities, is good gifts.

*Shal.* Well, let us see honest master Page: Is Falstaff there?

*Eva.* Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar, as I do despise one that is false; or, as I despise one that is not true. The knight, sir John, is there; and, I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door [*knocks*] for master Page. What, hoa! Got pless your house here!

*Enter PAGE.*

*Page.* Who's there?

*Eva.* Here is Got's plessing, and your friend, and justice Shallow: and here young master Slender; that, peradventures, shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

*Page.* I am glad to see your worships well: I thank you for my venison, master Shallow.

*Shal.* Master Page, I am glad to see you; Much good do it your good heart! I wished your venison better; it was ill kill'd:—How doth good mistress Page?—and I love you always with my heart, la; with my heart.



*Page.* Sir, I thank you.

*Shal.* Sir, I thank you; by yea and no, I do.

*Page.* I am glad to see you, good master Slender.

*Slen.* How does your fallow greyhound, sir? I heard say, he was out-run on Cotsale.

*Page.* It could not be judg'd, sir.

*Slen.* You'll not confess, you'll not confess.

*Shal.* That he will not;—'tis your fault, 'tis your fault:—'Tis a good dog.

*Page.* A cur, sir.

*Shal.* Sir, he's a good dog, and a fair dog; Can there be more said? he is good, and fair.—Is sir John Falstaff here?

*Page.* Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

*Eva.* It is spoke as a christians ought to speak.

*Shal.* He hath wrong'd me, master Page.

*Page.* Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

*Shal.* If it be confess'd, it is not redress'd; is not that so, master Page? He hath wrong'd me; indeed, he hath;—at a word, he hath;—believe me;—Robert Shallow, esquire, saith, he is wrong'd.

*Page.* Here comes sir John.

*Enter Sir JOHN FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, NYM, and PISTOL.*

*Fal.* Now, master Shallow; you'll complain of me to the king?

*Shal.* Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge.

*Fal.* But not kiss'd your keeper's daughter?

*Shal.* Tut, a pin! this shall be answer'd.

*Fal.* I will answer it straight;—I have done all this:—That is now answer'd.



*Shal.* The Council shall know this.

*Fal.* 'Twere better for you, if it were known in counsel : you'll be laugh'd at.

*Eva.* *Pauca verba*, sir John, good worts.

*Fal.* Good worts ! good cabbage.—Slender, I broke your head ; What matter have you against me ?

*Slen.* Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you ; and against your coney-catching rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. They carried me to the tavern, and made me drunk, and afterwards picked my pocket.

*Bard.* You Banbury cheese !

*Slen.* Ay, it is no matter.

*Pist.* How now, Mephostophilus ?

*Slen.* Ay, it is no matter.

*Nym.* Slice, I say ! *pauca, pauca* ; slice ! that's my numour.

*Slen.* Where's Simple, my man ?—can you tell, cousin ?

*Eva.* Peace, I pray you ! Now let us understand : There is three umpires in this matter, as I understand : that is—master Page, *fidelicet*, master Page ; and there is myself, *fidelicet*, myself ; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine host of the Garter.

*Page.* We three, to hear it, and end it between them.

*Eva.* Fery goot : I will make a prief of it in my notebook ; and we will afterwards 'ork upon the cause, with as great discreetly as we can.

*Fal.* Pistol,—

*Pist.* He hears with ears.

*Eva.* The tevil and his tam ! what phrase is this *He hears with ear* ? Why, it is affectations.

*Fal.* Pistol, did you pick master Slender's purse ?

*Slen.* Ay, by these gloves, did he, (or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else,) of



seven groats in mill-sixpences, and two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shilling and two pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by these gloves.

*Fal.* Is this true, Pistol?

*Eva.* No; it is false, if it is a pick-purse.

*Pist.* Ha, thou mountain-foreigner!—Sir John and master mine,

I combat challenge of this latten bilbo:

Word of denial in thy labras here;

Word of denial: froth and scum, thou liest.

*Slen.* By these gloves, then 'twas he.

*Nym.* Be advised, sir, and pass good humours: I will say, *marry trap*, with you, if you run the nuthook's humour on me; that is the very note of it.

*Slen.* By this hat, then he in the red face had it: for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass.

*Fal.* What say you, Scarlet and John?

*Bard.* Why, sir, for my part, I say, the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences.

*Eva.* It is his five senses: fie, what the ignorance is!

*Bard.* And being fap, sir, was, as they say, cashier'd; and so conclusions pass'd the careires.

*Slen.* Ay, you spake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter: I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil, godly company, for this trick: if I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God, and not with drunken knaves.

*Eva.* So Got 'udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

*Fal.* You hear all these matters denied, gentlemen; you hear it.



*Enter Mistress ANNE PAGE with wine; Mistress FORD and Mistress PAGE following.*

*Page.* Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within. *[Exit ANNE PAGE]*

*Slen.* O heaven! this is mistress Anne Page.

*Page.* How now, mistress Ford?

*Fal.* Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met: by your leave, good mistress. *[Kissing her.]*

*Page.* Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome:—Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner; come gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness.

*[Exeunt all but SHAL. SLENDER and EVANS.]*

*Slen.* I had rather than forty shillings, I had my book of Songs and Sonnets here:—

*Enter SIMPLE.*

How now, Simple! Where have you been? I must wait on myself, must I? You have not *The Book of Riddles* about you, have you?

*Sim.* *Book of Riddles!* why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake upon Allhallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

*Shal.* Come coz; come, coz; we stay for you. A word with you, coz: marry, this, coz; There is, as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off by sir Hugh here;—Do you understand me?

*Slen.* Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable; if it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

*Shal.* Nay, but understand me.

*Slen.* So I do, sir

*Eva.* Give ear to his motions, master Slender: I will description the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.



*Slen.* Nay, I will do as my cousin Shallow says : I pray you, pardon me ; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

*Eva.* But this is not the question ; the question is concerning your marriage.

*Shal.* Ay, there's the point, sir.

*Eva.* Marry, is it ; the very point of it ; to mistress Anne Page.

*Slen.* Why, if it be so, I will marry her, upon any reasonable demands.

*Eva.* But can you affection the 'oman ? Let us command to know that of your mouth, or of your lips ; for divers philosophers hold, that the lips is parcel of the mouth ;—Therefore, precisely, can you carry your good will to the maid ?

*Shal.* Cousin Abraham Slender, can you love her ?

*Slen.* I hope, sir,—I will do, as it shall become one that would do reason.

*Eva.* Nay, Got's lords and his ladies, you must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

*Shal.* That you must : Will you, upon good dowry, marry her ?

*Slen.* I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

*Shal.* Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz ; what I do, is to pleasure you, coz : Can you love the maid ?

*Slen.* I will marry her, sir, at your request ; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married, and have more occasion to know one another : I hope, upon familiarity will grow more contempt : but



if you say, *marry her*, I will marry her, that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely.

*Eva.* It is a fery discretion answer; save, the faul' is in the 'ort dissolutely: the 'ort is, according to our meaning, resolutely;—his meaning is good.

*Shal.* Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

*Slen.* Ay, or else I would I might be hanged, la.

*Re-enter ANNE PAGE.*

*Shal.* Here comes fair mistress Anne:—Would I were young, for your sake, mistress Anne!

*Anne.* The dinner is on the table; my father desires your worships' company.

*Shal.* I will wait on him, fair mistress Anne.

*Eva.* Od's plessed will! I will not be absence at the grace. [*Exeunt SHALLOW and Sir HUGH EVANS.*]

*Anne.* Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

*Slen.* No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

*Anne.* The dinner attends you, sir.

*Slen.* I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth: Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go, wait upon my cousin Shallow: [*Exit SIMPLE.*] A justice of peace sometime may be beholden to his friend for a man:—I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be lead: But what though? yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

*Anne.* I may not go in without your worship: they will not sit, till you come.

*Slen.* I'faith, I'll eat nothing; I thank you as much as though I did.

*Anne.* I pray you, sir, walk in.

*Slen.* I had rather walk here, I thank you: I bruised



my shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence, three veneys for a dish of stewed prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? be there bears i' th' town?

*Anne.* I think, there are, sir; I heard them talked of.

*Slen.* I love the sport well; but I shall as soon quarrel at it, as any man in England:—You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not?

*Anne.* Ay, indeed, sir.

*Slen.* That's meat and drink to me now: I have seen Sackerson loose, twenty times; and have taken him by the chain: but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shriek'd at it, that it pass'd:—but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em: they are very ill-favoured rough things.

*Re-enter PAGE.*

*Page.* Come, gentle master Slender, come; we stay for you.

*Slen.* I'll eat nothing, I thank you, sir.

*Page.* By cock and pye, you shall not choose, sir: come, come.

*Slen.* Nay, pray you, lead the way.

*Page.* Come on, sir.

*Slen.* Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

*Anne.* Not I, sir; pray you, keep on.

*Slen.* Truly, I will not go first; truly, la: I will not do you that wrong.

*Anne.* I pray you, sir.

*Slen.* I'll rather be unmannerly, than troublesome: you do yourself wrong, indeed, la. *[Exeunt.]*



SCENE II.—*The same.*

*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE.*

*Eva.* Go your ways, and ask of Doctor Caius' house, which is the way : and there dwells one mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurse, or his dry nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, his washer, and his wringer.

*Simp.* Well, sir.

*Eva.* Nay, it is petter yet :—give her this letter ; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with mistress Anne Page : and the letter is, to desire and require her to solicit your master's desires to mistress Anne Page : I pray you, be gone ; I will make an end of my dinner ; there's pippins and cheese to come. [*Exeunt*

SCENE III.—*A room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter FALSTAFF, Host, BARDOLPH, NYM, PISTOL, and ROBIN.*

*Fal.* Mine host of the Garter,—

*Host.* What says my bully-rook ? Speak schollarly, and wisely.

*Fal.* Truly, mine host, I must turn away some of my followers.

*Host.* Discard, bully Hercules ; cashier : let them wag ; trot, trot.

*Fal.* I sit at ten pounds a week.

*Host.* Thou'rt an emperor, Cæsar, Kéisar, and Pheezar. I will entertain Bardolph ; he shall draw he shall tap : said I well, bully Hector ?

*Fal.* Do so, good mine host.



*Host.* I have spoke ; let him follow : Let me see thee froth, and lime : I am at a word ; follow. [*Exit Host.*

*Fal.* Bardolph, follow him ; a tapster is a good trade : An old cloak makes a new jerkin ; a withered serving-man, a fresh tapster : Go ; adieu.

*Bard.* It is a life that I have desired ; I will thrive. [*Exit BARD.*

*Pist.* O base Gongarian wight ! wilt thou the spigot wield ?

*Nym.* He was gotten in drink : Is not the humour conceited ? His mind is not heroick, and there's the humour of it.

*Fal.* I am glad, I am so acquit of this tinder-box ; his thefts were too open : his filching was like an unskilful singer, he kept not time.

*Nym.* The good humour is, to steal at a minute's rest

*Pist.* Convey, the wise it call : Steal ! foh ; a fico for the phrase !

*Fal.* Well, sirs, I am almost out at heels.

*Pist.* Why then, let kibes ensue.

*Fal.* There is no remedy ; I must coney-catch ; I must shift.

*Pist.* Young ravens must have food.

*Fal.* Which of you know Ford of this town ?

*Pist.* I ken the wight ; he is of substance good.

*Fal.* My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

*Pist.* Two yards, and more.

*Fal.* No quips now, Pistol ; Indeed I am in the waist two yards about : but I am now about no waste ; I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife ; I spy entertainment in her ; she discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation : I can construe the action of her familiar tyle ; and the hardest voice



of her behaviour, to be English'd rightly, is, *I am sir John Falstaff's.*

*Pist.* He hath studied her well, and translated her well ; out of honesty into English.

*Nym.* The anchor is deep : Will that humour pass ?

*Fal.* Now, the report goes, she has all the rule of her husband's purse ; she hath legions of angels.

*Pist.* As many devils entertain ; and, *To her, boy,* say I.

*Nym.* The humour rises ; it is good : humour me the angels.

*Fal.* I have writ me here a letter to her : and here another to Page's wife ; who even now gave me good eyes too, examin'd my parts with most judicious eyliads : sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly.

*Pist.* Then did the sun on dung-hill shine.

*Nym.* I thank thee for that humour.

*Fal.* O, she did so course o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning glass ! Here's another letter to her : she bears the purse too ; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheater to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me ; they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go, bear thou this letter to mistress Page ; and thou this to mistress Ford : we will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

*Pist.* Shall I sir Pandarus of Troy become, And by my side wear steel ? then, Lucifer take all !

*Nym.* I will run no base humour : here, take the humour letter ; I will keep the 'haviour of reputation.

*Fal.* Hold, sirrah, [*to ROB.*] bear you these letters tightly ;  
Sail like my pinnace to these golden shores.—



Rogues, hence, avaunt ! vanish like hail-stones, go ;  
 Trudge, plod, away, o' th' hoof ; seek shelter, pack !  
 Falstaff will learn the humour of this age,  
 French thrift, you rogues ; myself, and skirted page.

[*Exeunt FALSTAFF and ROBIN.*]

*Pist.* Let vultures gripe thy guts ! for gourd, and  
 fullam holds,

And high and low beguile the rich and poor :  
 Tester I'll have in pouch, when thou shalt lack,  
 Base Phrygian Turk !

*Nym.* I have operations in my head, which be  
 humours of revenge.

*Pist.* Wilt thou revenge ?

*Nym.* By welkin, and her star !

*Pist.* With wit, or steel ?

*Nym.* With both the humours, I :

I will discuss the humour of this love to Page.

*Pist.* And I to Ford shall eke unfold,  
 How Falstaff, varlet vile,  
 His dove will prove, his gold will hold,  
 And his soft couch defile.

*Nym.* My humour shall not cool : I will incense Page  
 to deal with poison ; I will possess him with yellowness,  
 for the revolt of mien is dangerous : that is my true  
 humour.

*Pist.* Thou art the Mars of malcontents : I second  
 thee ; troop on. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A room in Dr. Caius's House.*

*Enter Mrs. QUICKLY, SIMPLE, and RUGBY.*

*Quick.* What ; John Rugby !—I pray thee, go to the  
 easement, and see if you can see my master, master



**Doctor Caius,** coming: if he do, i'faith, and find any body in the house, here will be an old abusing of God's patience, and the king's English.

**Rug.** I'll go watch. *[Exit RUGBY.]*

**Quick.** Go; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire. An honest, willing, kind fellow, as ever servant shall come in house withal; and, I warrant you, no tell-tale, nor no breed-bate: his worst fault is, that he is given to prayer; he is something peevish that way: but nobody but has his fault;—but let that pass. Peter Simple, you say your name is?

**Sim.** Ay, for fault of a better.

**Quick.** And master Slender's your master?

**Sim.** Ay, forsooth.

**Quick.** Does he not wear a great round beard, like a glover's paring-knife?

**Sim.** No, forsooth: he hath but a little wee face, with a little yellow beard; a Cain-colour'd beard.

**Quick.** A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

**Sim.** Ay, forsooth: but he is as tall a man of his hands, as any is between this and his head; he hath fought with a warrener.

**Quick.** How say you?—O, I should remember him; Does he not hold up his head, as it were? and strut in his gait?

**Sim.** Yes, indeed, does he.

**Quick.** Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell master parson Evans, I will do what I can for your master: Anne is a good girl, and I wish—

*Re-enter RUGBY.*

**Rug.** Out, alas! here comes my master.



*Quick.* We shall all be shent: Run in here, good young man; go into this closet. [*Shuts SIMPLE in the closet.*] He will not stay long.—What, John Rugby! John, what, John, I say!—Go, John, go enquire for my master; I doubt, he be not well, that he comes not home:—and down, down, adown-a, &c. [*Sings.*

*Enter Doctor CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vat is you sing? I do not like dese toys; Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *un boitier verd*; a box, a green-a box; Do intend vat I speak? a green-a box.

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth, I'll fetch it you. I am glad he went not in himself: if he had found the young man, he would have been horn-mad. [*Aside.*

*Caius.* *Fe, fe fe, fe! ma foi, il fait fort chaud. Je m'en vais à la Cour,—la grand affaire.*

*Quick.* Is it this, sir?

*Caius.* *Ouy; mette le au mon pocket; Depeche,* quickly:—Vere is dat knave Rugby?

*Quick.* What, John Rugby! John!

*Rug.* Here, sir.

*Caius.* You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby: Some, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to de court.

*Rug.* 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

*Caius.* By my trot, I tarry too long:—Od's me! *Qu'ay 'oublié?* dere is some simples in my closet, dat I will not for the varld I shall leave behind.

*Quick.* Ah me! he'll find the young man there, and be mad.

*Caius.* *O diable, diable!* vat is in my closet?—Villainy! *Luron!* [*Pulling SIMPLE out.*] Rugby, my rapier.



*Quick.* Good master, be content.

*Caius.* Verefore shall I be content-a?

*Quick.* The young man is an honest man.

*Caius.* Vat shall the honest man do in my c oset? dere is no honest man that shall come in my closet.

*Quick.* I beseech you, be not so flegmatick; hear the truth of it: He came of an errand to me from parson Hugh.

*Caius.* Vell.

*Sim.* Ay, forsooth, to desire her to——

*Quick.* Peace, I pray you.

*Caius.* Peace-a your tongue:—Speak-a your tale.

*Sim.* To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to mistress Anne Page for my master, in the way of marriage.

*Quick.* This is all, indeed, la; but I'll ne'er put my finger in the fire, and need not.

*Caius.* Sir Hugh send-a you?—Rugby, *baillez* me some paper: Tarry you a little-a while. [*Writes.*]

*Quick.* I am glad he is so quiet: if he had been thoroughly moved, you should have heard him so loud, and so melancholy;—But notwithstanding, man I'll do your master what good I can: and the very yea and the no is, the French Doctor, my master,—I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself;—

*Sim.* 'Tis a great charge, to come under one body's hand.

*Quick.* Are you avis'd o'that? you shall find it a great charge: and to be up early and down late;—but notwithstanding, (to tell you in your ear; I would have no words of it;) my master himself is in love with mistress



Anne Page : but notwithstanding that,—I know Anne's mind,—that's neither here nor there.

*Caius.* You jack'nape ; give-a dis letter to Sir Hugh ; by gar, it is a shallenge : I vill cut his troat in de park ; and I vill teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make :—you may be gone ; it is not good you tarry here :—by gar, I vill cut all his two stones ; by gar, he shall not have a stone to trow at his dog.

[*Exit SIMPLE*

*Quick.* Alas, he speaks but for his friend.

*Caius.* It is no matter-a for dat :—do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself?—by gar, I vill kill de Jack priest ; and I have appointed mine host of *de Jarterre* to measure our weapon :—by gar, I vill myself have Anne Page.

*Quick.* Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well : we must give folks leave to prate : What, the good-jer !

*Caius.* Rugby, come to the court vit me ;—By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turn your head out of my door :—Follow my heels, Rugby,

[*Exeunt CAIUS and RUGBY.*

*Quick.* You shall have An fools-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that : never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's mind than I do ; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank heaven.

*Fent.* [*Within.*] Who's within there, ho ?

*Quick.* Who's there, I trow ? Come near the house, I pray you.

*Enter FENTON.*

*Fent.* How now, good woman ; how dost thou ?

*Quick.* The better, that it pleases your good worship to ask.



*Fent.* What news? how does pretty mistress Anne?

*Quick.* In truth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise heaven for it.

*Fent.* Shall I do any good, thinkest thou? Shall I not lose my suit?

*Quick.* Troth, sir, all is in his hands above: but notwithstanding, master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a book, she loves you:—Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

*Fent.* Yes, marry, have I; what of that?

*Quick.* Well, thereby hangs a tale;—good faith, it is such another Nan;—but, I detest, an honest maid as ever broke bread:—We had an hour's talk of that wart;—I shall never laugh but in that maid's company!—But, indeed, she is given too much to allicholly and musing: But for you—Well, go to.

*Fent.* Well, I shall see her to-day: Hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf: if thou seest her before me, commend me—

*Quick.* Will I? i'faith, that we will: and I will tell your worship more of the wart, the next time we have confidence; and of other wooers.

*Fent.* Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

[*Exit*

*Quick.* Farewell to your worship.—Truly, an honest gentleman; but Anne loves him not; for I know Anne's mind as well as another does:—Out upon't! what have I forgot?

[*Exit.*



## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Before Page's House.*

*Enter Mistress PAGE, with a letter.*

*Mrs. Page.* What! have I'scaped love-letters in the holy-day time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see: [*Reads.*

*Ask me no reason why I love you; for though love use reason for his precisian, he admits him not for his counsellor: You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's sympathy: you are merry, so am I; Ha! ha! then there's more sympathy: you love sack, and so do I; Would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, mistress Page, (at the least, if the love of a soldier can suffice,) that I love thee. I will not say, pity me, 'tis not a soldier-like phrase; but I say, love me. By me,*

*Thine own true knight,  
By day or night,  
Or any kind of light,  
With all his might,  
For thee to fight,*

*John Falstaff.*

What a Herod of Jewry is this?—O wicked, wicked, world!—one that is well nigh worn to pieces with age, to show himself a young gallant! What an unweighed behaviour hath this Flemish drunkard picked (with the devil's name) out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company!—What should I say to him?—I was then frugal of my mirth:—heaven forgive me!—Why, 'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down



of men. How shall I be revenged on him? for revenged I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

*Enter Mistress FORD.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Mistress Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

*Mrs. Page.* And, trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

*Mrs. Page.* 'Faith, but you do, in my mind.

*Mrs. Ford.* Well, I do then; yet, I say, I could show you to the contrary: O, mistress Page, give me some counsel!

*Mrs. Page.* What's the matter, woman?

*Mrs. Ford.* O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

*Mrs. Page.* Hang the trifle, woman; take the honour: What is it?—dispense with trifles;—what is it?

*Mrs. Ford.* If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment, or so, I could be knighted.

*Mrs. Page.* What?—thou liest!—Sir Alice Ford!—These knights will hack; and so thou shouldst not alter the article of thy gentry.

*Mrs. Ford.* We burn day-light:—here, read, read;—perceive how I might be knighted.—I shall think the worse of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking: And yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty: and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words: but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the hundredth psalm to the



tune of *Green Sleeves*. What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think, the best way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. —Did you ever hear the like?

*Mrs. Page*. Letter for letter; but that the name of Page and Ford differs!—To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant, he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names, (sure more,) and these are of the second edition: He will print them out of doubt; for he cares not what he puts into the press, when he would put us two. I had rather be a giantess, and lie under mount Pelion. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious turtles, ere one chaste man.

*Mrs. Ford*. Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words: What doth he think of us?

*Mrs. Page*. Nay, I know not: It makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he know some strain in me, that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

*Mrs. Ford*. Boarding, call you it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.

*Mrs. Page*. So will I; if he come under my hatches, I'll never to sea again. Let's be revenged on him: let's appoint him a meeting; give him a show of comfort in his suit; and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawn'd his horses to mine Host of the Garter



*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I will consent to act any villainy against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. O, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, look, where he comes; and my good man too: he's as far from jealousy, as I am from giving him cause; and that, I hope, is an unmeasurable distance.

*Mrs. Ford.* You are the happier woman.

*Mrs. Page.* Let's consult together against this greasy knight: Come hither. [*They retire.*]

*Enter FORD, PISTOL, PAGE, and NYM.*

*Ford.* Well, I hope, it be not so.

*Pist.* Hope is a curtail dog in some affairs: Sir John affects thy wife.

*Ford.* Why, sir, my wife is not young.

*Pist.* He woos both high and low, both rich and poor,

Both young and old, one with another, Ford;  
He loves thy gally-mawfry; Ford, perpend.

*Ford.* Love my wife?

*Pist.* With liver burning hot: Prevent, or go thou,  
Like sir Actæon he, with Ring-wood at thy heels:—  
O, odious is the name!

*Ford.* What name, sir?

*Pist.* The horn, I say: Farewel.

Take heed; have open eye; for thieves do foot by night:

Take heed, ere summer comes, or cuckoo birds do sing.—

Away, sir corporal Nym.—

Believe it, Page; he speaks sense. [*Exit PISTOL.*]



*Ford.* I will be patient ; I will find out this.

*Nym.* And this is true ; [*to PAGE.*] I like not the humour of lying. He hath wrong'd me in some humours : I should have borne the humoured letter to her ; but I have a sword, and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife ; there's the short and the long. My name is corporal Nym ; I speak, and I avouch. 'Tis true :—my name is Nym, and Falstaff loves your wife.—Adieu ! I love not the humour of bread and cheese ; and there's the humour of it. Adieu.  
[*Exit Nym.*]

*Page.* *The humour of it*, quoth 'a ! here's a fellow frights humour out of his wits.

*Ford.* I will seek out Falstaff.

*Page.* I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

*Ford.* If I do find it, well.

*Page.* I will not believe such a Cataian, though the priest o' th' town commended him for a true man.

*Ford.* 'Twas a good sensible fellow : Well.

*Page.* How now, Meg ?

*Mrs. Page.* Whither go you, George ?—Hark you.

*Mrs. Ford.* How now, sweet Frank ? why art thou melancholy ?

*Ford.* I melancholy ! I am not melancholy.—Get you home, go.

*Mrs. Ford.* 'Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now.—Will you go, mistress Page ?

*Mrs. Page.* Have with you.—You'll come to dinner, George ?—Look, who comes yonder : she shall be our messenger to this paltry knight. [*Aside to Mrs. Ford.*]

*Enter Mistress QUICKLY.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Trust me, I thought on her : she'll fit it.



*Mrs. Page.* You are come to see my daughter Anne?

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth; And, I pray, how does good mistress Anne?

*Mrs. Page.* Go in with us, and see; we have an hour's talk with you.

[*Exeunt Mrs. PAGE, Mrs. FORD, and Mrs. QUICKLY.*]

*Page.* How now, master Ford?

*Ford.* You heard what this knave told me; did you not?

*Page.* Yes; And you heard what the other told me?

*Ford.* Do you think there is truth in them?

*Page.* Hang 'em, slaves; I do not think the knight would offer it: but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives, are a yoke of his discarded men; very rogues, now they be out of service.

*Ford.* Were they his men?

*Page.* Marry, were they.

*Ford.* I like it never the better for that.—Does he lie at the Garter?

*Page.* Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words, let it lie on my head.

*Ford.* I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loath to turn them together: A man may be too confident: I would have nothing lie on my head: I cannot be thus satisfied.

*Page.* Look, where my ranting host of the Garter comes: there is either liquor in his pate, or money in his purse, when he looks so merrily.—How now, mine host?



*Enter Host, and SHALLOW.*

*Host.* How now, bully-rook? thou'rt a gentleman : cavalero-justice, I say.

*Shal.* I follow, mine host, I follow.—Good even, and twenty, good master Page! Master Page, will you go with us? we have sport in hand.

*Host.* Tell him, cavalero-justice; tell him, bully-rook.

*Shal.* Sir, there is a fray to be fought, between sir Hugh the Welch priest, and Caius the French doctor.

*Ford.* Good mine host o' th' Garter, a word with you.

*Host.* What say'st thou, bully-rook? [*They go aside.*]

*Shal.* Will you [*to PAGE*] go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and, I think, he hath appointed them contrary places: for, believe me, I hear, the parson is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be.

*Host.* Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavalier?

*Ford.* None, I protest: but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him, and tell him, my name is Brook; only for a jest.

*Host.* My hand, bully: thou shalt have egress and regress; said I well? and thy name shall be Brook: It is a merry knight.—Will you go on, hearts?

*Shal.* Have with you, mine host.

*Page.* I have heard, the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier.

*Shal.* Tut, sir, I could have told you more: In these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what: 'tis the heart, master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have seen the time, with my long



sword, I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats.

*Host.* Here, boys, here, here ! shall we wag ?

—*Page.* Have with you :—I had rather hear them scold than fight. [*Exeunt Host, SHALLOW, and PAGE.*

*Ford.* Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily : She was in his company at Page's house ; and, what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into't : and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff : If I find her honest, I lose not my labour ; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter FALSTAFF and PISTOL.*

*Fal.* I will not lend thee a penny.

*Pist.* Why, then the world's mine oyster,  
Which I with sword will open.—

I will retort the sum in equipage.

*Fal.* Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn : I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow Nym ; or else you had looked through the grate, like a geminy of baboons. I am damned in hell, for swearing to gentlemen my friends, you were good soldiers, and tall fellows : and when mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honour, thou hadst it not.

*Pist.* Didst thou not share ? hadst thou not fifteen pence ?



*Fal.* Reason, you rogue, reason: Think'st thou, I'll endanger my soul *gratis*? At a word, hang no more about me, I am no gibbet for you:—go.—A short knife and a throng;—to your manor of Pickt-hatch, go.—You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue!—you stand upon your honour!—Why, thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do, to keep the terms of my honour precise. I, I, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of heaven on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it, you?

*Pist.* I do relent; What would'st thou more of man?

*Enter* ROBIN.

*Rob.* Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

*Fal.* Let her approach.

*Enter* Mistress QUICKLY.

*Quick.* Give your worship good-morrow.

*Fal.* Good-morrow, good wife.

*Quick.* Not so, an't please your worship.

*Fal.* Good maid, then.

*Quick.* I'll be sworn; as my mother was, the first hour I was born.

*Fal.* I do believe the swearer: What with me?

*Quick.* Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

*Fal.* Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

*Quick.* There is one mistress Ford, sir;—I pray, come



a little nearer this ways :—I myself dwell with master doctor Caius.

*Fal.* Well, on : Mistress Ford, you say,——

*Quick.* Your worship says very true : I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways.

*Fal.* I warrant thee, nobody hears ;—mine own people, mine own people.

*Quick.* Are they so ? Heaven bless them, and make them his servants !

*Fal.* Well : Mistress Ford ;—what of her ?

*Quick.* Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, lord ! your worship's a wanton : Well, heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray !

*Fal.* Mistress Ford ;—come, mistress Ford,—

*Quick.* Marry, this is the short and the long of it ; you have brought her into such a canaries, as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches ; I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift ; smelling so sweetly, (all musk,) and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold ; and in such alligant terms ; and in such wine and sugar of the best, and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart ; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her.—I had myself twenty angels given me this morning : but I defy all angels, (in any such sort, as they say,) but in the way of honesty :—and, I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all : and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners ; but, I warrant you, all is one with her.



*Fal.* But what says she to me? be brief, my good she Mercury.

*Quick.* Marry, she hath received your letter; for the which she thanks you a thousand times: and she gives you to notify, that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

*Fal.* Ten and eleven?

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of;—master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him; he's a very jealousy man; she leads a very frampold life with him, good heart.

*Fal.* Ten and eleven; Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her.

*Quick.* Why, you say well: But I have another messenger to your worship: Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too;—and let me tell you in your ear, she's as fartuous a civil modest wife, and one (I tell you) that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other: and she bade me tell your worship, that her husband is seldom from home; but, she hopes, there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man; surely, I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.

*Fal.* Not I, I assure thee; setting the attraction of my good parts aside, I have no other charms.

*Quick.* Blessing on your heart for't!

*Fal.* But, I pray thee, tell me this: has Ford's wife, and Page's wife, acquainted each other how they love me?

*Quick.* That were a jest, indeed!—they have not so



little grace, I hope :—that were a trick, indeed ! But mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves ; her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page : and, truly, master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does ; do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will ; and, truly, she deserves it : for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page ; no remedy.

*Fal.* Why, I will.

*Quick.* Nay, but do so then : and, look you, he may come and go between you both ; and, in any case, have a nay-word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand any thing ; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness : old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and the world.

*Fal.* Fare thee well : commend me to them both : there's my purse ; I am yet thy debtor.—Boy, go along with this woman.—This news distracts me !

[*Exeunt QUICKLY and ROBIN.*

*Pist.* This punk is one of Cupid's carriers : —  
Clap on more sails ; pursue, up with your fights ;  
Give fire ; she is my prize, or ocean whelm them all !

[*Exit PISTOL.*

*Fal.* Say'st thou so, old Jack ? go thy ways ; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee ? Wilt thou, after the expence of so much money, be now a gainer ? Good body, I thank thee : Let them say, 'tis grossly done ; so it be fairly done, no matter.



*Enter BARDOLPH.*

*Bard.* Sir John, there's one master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you ; and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

*Fal.* Brook, is his name ?

*Bard.* Ay, sir.

*Fal.* Call him in ; [*Exit BARDOLPH.*] Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflow such liquor. Ah ! ha ! mistress Ford and mistress Page, have I encompassed you ? go to ; *via !*

*Re-enter BARDOLPH, with FORD disguised.*

*Ford.* Bless you, sir.

*Fal.* And you, sir : Would you speak with me ?

*Ford.* I make bold, to press with so little preparation upon you.

*Fal.* You're welcome ; What's your will ? Give us leave, drawer. [*Exit BARDOLPH.*]

*Ford.* Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much ; my name is Brook.

*Fal.* Good master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you.

*Ford.* Good sir John, I sue for yours : not to charge you ; for I must let you understand, I think myself in better plight for a lender than you are : the which hath something embolden'd me to this unseasoned intrusion ; for they say, if money go before, all ways do lie open.

*Fal.* Money is a good soldier, sir, and will on.

*Ford.* Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me : if you will help me to bear it, sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage.



*Fal.* Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter.

*Ford.* I will tell you, sir, if you will give me the hearing.

*Fal.* Speak, good master Brook ; I shall be glad to be your servant.

*Ford.* Sir, I hear you are a scholar,—I will be brief with you ;—and you have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means, as desire, to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection : but, good sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own ; that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know, how easy it is to be such an offender.

*Fal.* Very well, sir ; proceed.

*Ford.* There is a gentlewoman in this town, her husband's name is Ford.

*Fal.* Well, sir.

*Ford.* I have long loved her, and, I protest to you, bestowed much on her ; followed her with a doting observance ; engrossed opportunities to meet her ; fee'd every slight occasion, that could but niggardly give me sight of her ; not only bought many presents to give her, but have given largely to many, to know what she would have given : briefly, I have pursued her, as love hath pursued me ; which hath been, on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind, or in my means, meed, I am sure, I have received none ; unless experience be a jewel : that I have purchased at an infinite rate ; and that hath taught me to say this :



*Love like a shadow flies, when substance love pursues;  
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.*

*Fal.* Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

*Ford.* Never.

*Fal.* Have you importuned her to such a purpose?

*Ford.* Never.

*Fal.* Of what quality was your love then?

*Ford.* Like a fair house, built upon another man's ground; so that I have lost my edifice, by mistaking the place where I erected it.

*Fal.* To what purpose have you unfolded this to me?

*Ford.* When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some say, that, though she appear honest to me, yet, in other places, she enlargeth her mirth so far, that there is shrewd construction made of her. Now, sir John, here is the heart of my purpose: You are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance, authentick in your place and person, generally allowed for your many war-like, court-like, and learned preparations.

*Fal.* O, sir!

*Ford.* Believe it, for you know it:—There is money; spend it, spend it; spend more; spend all I have; only give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Ford's wife: use your art of wooing, win her to consent to you; if any man may, you may as soon as any.

*Fal.* Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I should win what you would enjoy? Methinks, you prescribe to yourself very preposterously.

*Ford.* O, understand my drift! she dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my



soul dares not present itself; she is too bright to be looked against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves; I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage vow, and a thousand other her defences, which now are too strongly embattled against me: What say you to't, sir John?

*Fal.* Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

*Ford.* O good sir!

*Fal.* Master Brook, I say you shall.

*Ford.* Want no money, sir John, you shall want none.

*Fal.* Want no mistress Ford, master Brook, you shall want none. I shall be with her, (I may tell you,) by her own appointment; even as you came in to me, her assistant, or go-between, parted from me: I say, I shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally knave, her husband, will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

*Ford.* I am blest in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir?

*Fal.* Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave! I know him not:—yet I wrong him, to call him poor; they say, the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money; for the which his wife seems to me well-favoured. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

*Ford.* I would you knew Ford, sir; that you might avoid him, if you saw him.

*Fal.* Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my



cudgel : it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns : master Brook, thou shalt know, I will predominate o'er the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife.—Come to me soon at night :—Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his stile ; thou, master Brook, shalt know him for a knave and cuckold :—come to me soon at night. [Exit.

*Ford.* What a damned Epicurean rascal is this !—My heart is ready to crack with impatience.—Who says, this is improvident jealousy ? My wife hath sent to him, the hour is fixed, the match is made. Would any man have thought this ?—See the hell of having a false woman ! my bed shall be abused, my coffers ransacked, my reputation gnawn at ; and I shall not only receive this villainous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms ! names !—Amaimon sounds well ; Lucifer, well ; Barbason, well ; yet they are devils additions, the names of fiends : but cuckold ! wittol-cuckold ! the devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass ; he will trust his wife, he will not be jealous : I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter, parson Hugh the Welchman with my cheese, an Irishman with my aqua-vitæ bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself : then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises : and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect. Heaven be praised for my jealousy !—Eleven o'clock the hour ;—I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it ; better three hours too soon, than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie ! cuckold ! cuckold ! cuckold ! [Exit



SCENE III.—*Windsor Park.**Enter CAIUS and RUGBY**Caius.* Jack Rugby!*Rug.* Sir.*Caius.* Vat is de clock, Jack?*Rug.* 'Tis past the hour, sir, that sir Hugh promised to meet.*Caius.* By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible vell, dat he is no come: by gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.*Rug.* He is wise, sir; he knew, your worship would kill him, if he came.*Caius.* By gar, de herring is no dead, so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.*Rug.* Alas, sir, I cannot fence.*Caius.* Villainy, take your rapier.*Rug.* Forbear; here's company.*Enter Host, SHALLOW, SLENDER, and PAGE**Host.* 'Bless thee, bully doctor.*Shal.* 'Save you, master doctor Caius.*Page.* Now, good master doctor!*Slen.* Give you good-morrow, sir.*Caius.* Vat be all you, one, two, tree, four, come for?*Host.* To see thee fight, to see thee foin, to see thee traverse, to see thee here, to see thee there; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock, thy reverse, thy distance thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian? is he dead, my Francisco? ha, bully! What says my Æsculapius?



my Galen? my heart of elder? ha! is he dead, bully Stale? Is he dead?

*Caius.* By gar, he is de coward Jack priest of the world; he is not show his face.

*Host.* Thou art a Castilian king, Urinal! Hector of Greece, my boy!

*Caius.* I pray you, bear vitness that me have stay six or seven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come.

*Shal.* He is the wiser man, master doctor: he is a curer of souls, and you a curer of bodies; if you should fight, you go against the hair of your professions; is it not true, master Page?

*Page.* Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

*Shal.* Bodykins, master Page, though I now be old, and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one: though we are justices, and doctors, and churchmen, master Page, we have some salt of our youth in us; we are the sons of women, master Page.

*Page.* 'Tis true, master Shallow.

*Shal.* It will be found so, master Page. Master doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace; you have showed yourself a wise physician, and sir Hugh hath shown himself a wise and patient churchman: you must go with me, master doctor.

*Host.* Pardon, guest justice:—A word, monsieur Muck-water.

*Caius.* Muck-vater! vat is dat?

*Host.* Muck-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

*Caius.* By gar, then I have as much muck-vater as de Englishman:—Scurvy jack-dog priest! by gar, me vill cut his ears.



*Host.* He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

*Caius.* Clapper-de-claw! vat is dat?

*Host.* That is, he will make thee amends.

*Caius.* By gar, me do look, he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

*Host.* And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

*Caius.* Me tank you for dat.

*Host.* And moreover, bully,—But first, master guest, and master Page, and eke cavalero Slender, go you through the town to Frogmore. [*Aside to them.*

*Page.* Sir Hugh is there, is he?

*Host.* He is there: see what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields: will it do well?

*Shal.* We will do it.

*Page. Shal. and Slen.* Adieu, good master doctor.

[*Exeunt* PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.

*Caius.* By gar, me vill kill de priest; for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

*Host.* Let him die: but, first, sheath thy impatience; throw cold water on thy choler: go about the fields with me through Frogmore; I will bring thee where mistress Anne Page is, at a farm-house a feasting; and thou shalt woo her: Cry'd game, said I well?

*Caius.* By gar, me tank you for dat: by gar, I love you; and I shall procure-a you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

*Host.* For the which, I will be thy adversary towards Anne Page; said I well?

*Caius.* By gar, 'tis good; vell said.

*Host.* Let us wag then.

*Caius.* Come at my heels, Jack Rugby. [*Exeunt*



## ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A Field near Frogmore.*

*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE.*

*Eva.* I pray you now, good master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for master Caius, that calls himself *Doctor of Physick*?

*Sim.* Marry, sir, the city-ward, the park-ward, every way; old Windsor way, and every way but the town way.

*Eva.* I most feheemently desire you, you will also look that way.

*Sim.* I will, sir.

*Eva.* 'Pless my soul! how full of cholers I am, and trempling of mind!—I shall be glad, if he have deceived me:—how melancholies I am!—I will knog his urinals about his knave's costard, when I have good opportunities for the 'ork:—'pless my soul! [*Sings.*

*To shallow rivers, to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals;  
There will we make our peds of roses,  
And a thousand fragrant posies.  
To shallow—*

'Mercy on me! I have a great dispositions to cry.

*Melodious birds sing madrigals;—  
When as I sat in Pabylon,—  
And a thousand vagram posies.  
To shallow—*

*Sim.* Yonder he is coming, this way, sir Hugh.



*Eva.* He's welcome :—

*To shallow rivers, to whose falls—*

Heaven prosper the right !—What weapons has he ?

*Sim.* No weapons, sir : There comes my master, master Shallow, and another gentleman from Frogmore, over the stile, this way.

*Eva.* Pray you, give me my gown ; or else keep it in your arms.

*Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*

*Shal.* How now, master parson ? Good-morrow, good sir Hugh. Keep a gamester from the dice, and a good student from his book, and it is wonderful.

*Slen.* Ah, sweet Anne Page !

*Page.* Save you, good sir Hugh !

*Eva.* 'Pless you from his mercy sake, all of you !

*Shal.* What ! the sword and the word ! do you study them both, master parson ?

*Page.* And youthful still, in your doublet and hose, this raw rheumatick day ?

*Eva.* There is reasons and causes for it.

*Page.* We are come to you, to do a good office, master parson.

*Eva.* Fery well : What is it ?

*Page.* Yonder is a most reverend gentleman, who belike, having received wrong by some person, is at most odds with his own gravity and patience, that ever you saw.

*Shal.* I have lived fourscore years, and upward ; I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning, so wide of his own respect.

*Eva.* What is he ?



*Page.* I think you know him ; master doctor Caius, the renowned French physician.

*Eva.* Got's will, and his passion of my heart ! I had as lief you would tell me of a mess of porridge.

*Page.* Why ?

*Eva.* He has no more knowledge in Hibocrates and Galen,—and he is a knave besides ; a cowardly knave, as you would desires to be acquainted withal.

*Page.* I warrant you, he's the man should fight with him.

*Slen.* O, sweet Anne Page !

*Shal.* It appears so, by his weapons :—Keep them asunder ;—here comes doctor Caius.

*Enter Host, CAIUS, and RUGBY.*

*Page.* Nay, good master parson, keep in your weapon.

*Shal.* So do you, good master doctor.

*Host.* Disarm them, and let them question ; let them keep their limbs whole, and hack our English.

*Caius.* I pray you, let-a me speak a word vit your ear : Verefore vill you not meet a-me ?

*Eva.* Pray you, use your patience : In good time.

*Caius.* By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog, John ape.

*Eva.* Pray you, let us not be laughing-stogs to other men's humours ; I desire you in friendship, and I will one way or other make you amends :—I will knog your arinals about your knave's cogscomb, for missing your meetings and appointments.

*Caius.* *Diable!*—Jack Rugby,—mine *Host de Jarterre*, have I not stay for him, to kill him ? have I not, at de place I did appoint ?

*Eva.* As I am a christians soul, now, look you, this



is the place appointed ; I'll be judgement by mine host of the Garter.

*Host.* Peace, I say, Guallia and Gaul, French and Welch ; soul-curer and body-curer.

*Caius.* Ay, dat is very good ! excellent !

*Host.* Peace, I say ; hear mine host of the Garter. Am I politick ? am I subtle ? am I a Machiavel ? Shall I lose my doctor ? no ; he gives me the potions, and the motions. Shall I lose my parson ? my priest ? my sir Hugh ? no ; he gives me the proverbs and the no-verbs.—Give me thy hand, terrestrial ; so :—Give me thy hand celestial ; so.—Boys of art, I have deceived you both ; I have directed you to wrong places : your hearts are mighty, your skins are whole, and let burnt sack be the issue.—Come, lay their swords to pawn :—Follow me, lad of peace ; follow, follow, follow.

*Shal.* Trust me, a mad host :—Follow, gentlemen, follow.

*Slen.* O, sweet Anne Page !

[*Exeunt* SHALLOW, SLENDER, PAGE, and Host.

*Caius.* Ha ! do I perceive dat ? have you make-a de sot of us ? ha, ha !

*Eva.* This is well ; he has made us his vlouting-stog.—I desire you, that we may be friends ; and let us knog our prains together, to be revenge on this same scall, scurvy, cogging companion, the host of the Garter.

*Caius.* By gar, vit all my heart ; he promise to bring me vere is Anne Page : by gar, he deceive me too.

*Eva.* Well, I will smite his noddles :—Pray you, follow. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE II. — *The street in Windsor.*

*Enter Mistress PAGE and ROBIN.*

*Mrs. Page.* Nay, keep your way, little gallant; you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader: Whether had you rather, lead mine eyes, or eye your master's heels?

*Rob.* I had rather, forsooth, go before you like a man, than follow him like a dwarf.

*Mrs. Page.* O you are a flattering boy; now, I see, you'll be a courtier.

*Enter FORD.*

*Ford.* Well met, mistress Page: Whither go you?

*Mrs. Page.* Truly, sir, to see your wife: Is she at home?

*Ford.* Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of company: I think, if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

*Mrs. Page.* Be sure of that,—two other husbands.

*Ford.* Where had you this pretty weather-cock?

*Mrs. Page.* I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of: What do you call your knight's name, sirrah?

*Rob.* Sir John Falstaff.

*Ford.* Sir John Falstaff!

*Mrs. Page.* He, he; I can never hit on's name.—There is such a league between my good man and he! —Is your wife at home, indeed?

*Ford.* Indeed, she is.

*Mrs. Page.* By your leave, sir;—I am sick, till I see her.

[*Exeunt Mrs. PAGE and ROBIN.*]

*Ford.* Has Page any brains? hath he any eyes? hath



he any thinking? Sure, they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why, this boy will carry a letter twenty miles, as easy as a cannon will shoot point-blank twelve score. He pieces-out his wife's inclination; he gives her folly motion, and advantage: and now she's going to my wife, and Falstaff's boy with her. A man may hear this shower sing in the wind!—and Falstaff's boy with her!—Good plots!—they are laid; and our revolted wives share damnation together. Well; I will take him, then torture my wife, pluck the borrowed veil of modesty from the so seeming mistress Page, divulge Page himself for a secure and wilful Actæon; and to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall cry aim. [*Clock strikes.*] The clock gives me my cue, and my assurance bids me search; there I shall find Falstaff: I shall be rather praised for this, than mocked; for it is as positive as the earth is firm, that Falstaff is there: I will go.

*Enter* PAGE, SHALLOW, SLENDER, Host, Sir HUGH  
EVANS, CAIUS, and RUGBY.

*Shal. Page, &c.* Well met, master Ford.

*Ford.* Trust me, a good knot: I have good cheer at home; and, I pray you, all go with me.

*Shal.* I must excuse myself, master Ford.

*Slen.* And so must I, sir; we have appointed to dine with mistress Anne, and I would not break with her for more money than I'll speak of.

*Shal.* We have lingered about a match between Anne Page and my cousin Slender, and this day we shall have our answer.

*Slen.* I hope, I have your good will, father Page.

*Page.* You have, master Slender; I stand wholly for



you : — but my wife, master doctor, is for you altogether.

*Caius.* Ay, by gar ; and de maid is love-a me ; my nursh-a Quickly tell me so mush.

*Host.* What say you to young master Fenton ? he capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he writes verses, he speaks holyday, he smells April and May : he will carry't, he will carry't ; 'tis in his buttons ; he will carry't.

*Page.* Not by my consent, I promise you. The gentleman is of no having : he kept company with the wild Prince and Poins ; he is of too high a region, he knows too much. No, he shall not knit a knot in his fortunes with the finger of my substance : if he take her, let him take her simply ; the wealth I have waits on my consent, and my consent goes not that way.

*Ford.* I beseech you, heartily, some of you go home with me to dinner : besides your cheer, you shall have sport ; I will show you a monster.—Master doctor, you shall go ;—so shall you, master Page ;—and you, sir Hugh.

*Shal.* Well, fare you well :—we shall have the freer wooing at master Page's.

[*Exeunt* SHALLOW and SLENDER.

*Caius.* Go home, John Rugby ; I come anon.

[*Exit* RUGBY.

*Host.* Farewell, my hearts : I will to my honest knight Falstaff, and drink canary with him.

[*Exit* Host.

*Ford.* [*Aside.*] I think, I shall drink in pipe-wine first with him ; I'll make him dance. Will you go, gentles ?

*All.* Have with you, to see this monster. [*Exeunt*



SCENE III.—*A Room in Ford's House.*

*Enter Mrs. FORD and Mrs. PAGE.*

*Mrs. Ford.* What, John ! what, Robert ?

*Mrs. Page.* Quickly, quickly : Is the buck-basket——

*Mrs. Ford.* I warrant :—What, Robin, I say.

*Enter Servants with a Basket.*

*Mrs. Page.* Come, come, come.

*Mrs. Ford.* Here, set it down.

*Mrs. Page.* Give your men the charge ; we must be brief.

*Mrs. Ford.* Marry, as I told you before, John, and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brewhouse ; and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and (without any pause, or staggering,) take this basket on your shoulders : that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters in Datchet mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch, close by the Thames side.

*Mrs. Page.* You will do it ?

*Mrs. Ford.* I have told them over and over ; they lack no direction : Be gone, and come when you are called.

*[Exeunt Servants]*

*Mrs. Page.* Here comes little Robin.

*Enter ROBIN.*

*Mrs. Ford.* How now, my eyas-musket ? what news with you ?

*Rob.* My master sir John is come in at your back-door, mistress Ford ; and requests your company.

*Mrs. Page.* You little Jack-a-lent, have you been true to us ?

*Rob.* Ay, I'll be sworn : My master knows not of



your being here ; and hath threatened to put me into everlasting liberty, if I tell you of it ; for, he swears, he'll turn me away.

*Mrs. Page.* Thou'rt a good boy ; this secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new doublet and hose.—I'll go hide me.

*Mrs. Ford.* Do so :—Go tell thy master, I am alone. Mistress Page, remember you your cue. [*Exit* ROBIN.]

*Mrs. Page.* I warrant thee ; if I do not act it, hiss me. [*Exit* *Mrs. PAGE.*]

*Mrs. Ford.* Go to then ; we'll use this unwholesome humidity, this gross watry pumpion ;—we'll teach him to know turtles from jays.

*Enter* FALSTAFF.

*Fal.* Have I caught thee, my heavenly jewel ? Why, now let me die, for I have lived long enough ; this is the period of my ambition : O this blessed hour !

*Mrs. Ford.* O sweet sir John !

*Fal.* Mistress Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, mistress Ford. Now shall I sin in my wish : I would thy husband were dead ; I'll speak it before the best lord, I would make thee my lady.

*Mrs. Ford.* I your lady, sir John ! alas, I should be a pitiful lady.

*Fal.* Let the court of France show me such another ; I see how thine eye would emulate the diamond : Thou hast the right arched bent of the brow, that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance.

*Mrs. Ford.* A plain kerchief, sir John : my brows become nothing else ; nor that well neither.



*Fal.* Thou art a traitor to say so; thou would'st make an absolute courtier; and the firm fixture of thy foot would give an excellent motion to thy gait, in a semi-circled farthingale. I see what thou wert, if fortune thy foe were not; nature is thy friend: Come, thou canst not hide it.

*Mrs. Ford.* Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

*Fal.* What made me love thee? let that persuade thee, there's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog, and say, thou art this and that, like a many of these lispig haw-thorn buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Buckler's-bury in simple-time; I cannot: but I love thee; none but thee; and thou deservest it.

*Mrs. Ford.* Do not betray me, sir; I fear, you love mistress Page.

*Fal.* Thou might'st as well say, I love to walk by the Counter-gate; which is as hateful to me as the reek or a lime-kiln.

*Mrs. Ford.* Well, heaven knows, how I love you; and you shall one day find it.

*Fal.* Keep in that mind; I'll deserve it.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I must tell you, so you do; or else I could not be in that mind.

*Rob.* [*within.*] Mistress Ford, mistress Ford! here's mistress Page at the door, sweating, and blowing, and looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently.

*Fal.* She shall not see me; I will ensconce me behind the arras.

*Mrs. Ford.* Pray you, do so; she's a very tattling woman.—  
[*FALSTAFF hides himself*]



*Enter Mistress PAGE and ROBIN.*

What's the matter? how now?

*Mrs. Page.* O mistress Ford, what have you done  
You're shamed, you are overthrown, you are undone  
for ever.

*Mrs. Ford.* What's the matter, good mistress Page?

*Mrs. Page.* O well-a-day, mistress Ford! having an  
honest man to your husband, to give him such cause  
of suspicion!

*Mrs. Ford.* What cause of suspicion?

*Mrs. Page.* What cause of suspicion?—Out upon you  
how am I mistook in you?

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, alas! what's the matter?

*Mrs. Page.* Your husband's coming hither, woman  
with all the officers in Windsor, to search for a gentle-  
man, that, he says, is here now in the house, by your  
consent, to take an ill advantage of his absence: You  
are undone.

*Mrs. Ford.* Speak louder.—[*Aside.*]—'Tis not so, I  
hope.

*Mrs. Page.* Pray heaven it be not so, that you have  
such a man here; but 'tis most certain your husband's  
coming with half Windsor at his heels, to search for  
such a one. I come before to tell you: If you know  
yourself clear, why I am glad of it: but if you have a  
friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amazed—  
call all your senses to you; defend your reputation, or  
bid farewell to your good life for ever.

*Mrs. Ford.* What shall I do?—There is a gentleman,  
my dear friend; and I fear not mine own shame, so  
much as his peril: I had rather than a thousand pounds  
he were out of the house.



*Mrs. Page.* For shame, never stand *you had rather*, and *you had rather*; your husband's here at hand, bethink you of some conveyance: in the house you cannot hide him.—O, how have you deceived me!—Look, here is a basket; if he be of any reasonab' stature, he may creep in here; and throw foul linen upon him, as if it were going to bucking: Or, it is whiting-time, send him by your two men to Datchet mead.

*Mrs. Ford.* He's too big to go in there: What shall I do?

*Re-enter FALSTAFF.*

*Fal.* Let me see't, let me see't! O let me see't! I'll in, I'll in;—follow your friend's counsel;—I'll in.

*Mrs. Page.* What! sir John Falstaff! Are these your letters, knight?

*Fal.* I love thee, and none but thee; help me away: let me creep in here; I'll never——

[*He goes into the basket; they cover him with foul linen.*]

*Mrs. Page.* Help to cover your master, boy: Call your men, mistress Ford:—You dissembling knight!

*Mrs. Ford.* What, John, Robert, John! [*Exit ROBIN.* *Re-enter Servants.*] Go take up these clothes here, quickly; Where's the cowl-staff? look, how you drumble: carry them to the laundress in Datchet mead; quickly, come.

*Enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and Sir HUGH EVANS.*

*Ford.* Pray you, come near: if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me, then let me be your jest; I deserve it.—How now? whither bear you this?

*Serv.* To the laundress, forsooth.



*Mrs. Ford.* Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? You were best meddle with buck-washing.

*Ford.* Buck? I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck? Ay, buck; I warrant you, buck; and of the season too; it shall appear. [*Exeunt Servants with the basket.*] Gentlemen, I have dreamed to-night; I'll tell you my dream. Here, here, here be my keys: ascend my chambers, search, seek, find out: I'll warrant, we'll unkennel the fox:—Let me stop this way first:—So, now uncape.

*Page.* Good master Ford, be contented: you wrong yourself too much.

*Ford.* True, master Page.—Up, gentlemen; you shall see sport anon: follow me, gentlemen. [*Exit.*

*Eva.* This is fery fantastical humours, and jealousies.

*Caius.* By gar, 'tis no de fashion of France: it is not jealous in France.

*Page.* Nay, follow him, gentlemen; see the issue of his search. [*Exeunt EVANS, PAGE, and CAIUS.*

*Mrs. Page.* Is there not a double excellency in this?

*Mrs. Ford.* I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceived, or sir John.

*Mrs. Page.* What a taking was he in, when your husband asked who was in the basket!

*Mrs. Ford.* I am half afraid he will have need of washing; so throwing him into the water will do him a benefit.

*Mrs. Page.* Hang him, dishonest rascal! I would all of the same strain were in the same distress.

*Mrs. Ford.* I think, my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.



*Mrs. Page.* I will lay a plot to try that : And we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff : his dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

*Mrs. Ford.* Shall we send that foolish carrion, mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water ; and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment ?

*Mrs. Page.* We'll do it ; let him be sent for to-morrow, eight o'clock, to have amends.

*Re-enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and Sir HUGH EVANS.*

*Ford.* I cannot find him : may be the knave bragged of that he could not compass.

*Mrs. Page.* Heard you that ?

*Mrs. Ford.* Ay, ay, peace :—You use me well, master Ford, do you ?

*Ford.* Ay, I do so.

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven make you better than your thoughts !

*Ford.* Amen.

*Mrs. Page.* You do yourself mighty wrong master Ford.

*Ford.* Ay, ay ; I must bear it.

*Eva.* If there be any pody in the house, and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, heaven forgive my sins at the day of judgement !

*Caius.* By gar, nor I too ; dere is no bodies.

*Page.* Fie, fie, master Ford ! are you not ashamed ? What spirit, what devil suggests this imagination ? I would not have your distemper in this kind, for the wealth of Windsor Castle.

*Ford.* 'Tis my fault, master Page : I suffer for it.

*Eva.* You suffer for a pad conscience : your wife



is as honest a 'omans, as I will desires among five thousand, and five hundred too.

*Caius.* By gar, I see 'tis an honest woman.

*Ford.* Well;—I promised you a dinner:—Come come, walk in the park: I pray you, pardon me; I will hereafter make known to you, why I have done this.—Come, wife;—come, mistress Page; I pray you pardon me; pray heartily, pardon me.

*Page.* Let's go in, gentlemen; but, trust me, we'll moek him. I do invite you to-morrow morning to my house to breakfast; after, we'll a birding together; I have a fine hawk for the bush: Shall it be so?

*Ford.* Any thing.

*Eva.* If there is one, I shall make two in the company.

*Caius.* If there be one or two, I shall make-a de turd.

*Eva.* In your teeth: for shame.

*Ford.* Pray you go, master Page.

*Eva.* I pray you now, remembrance to-morrow on the lousy knave, mine host.

*Caius.* Dat is good; by gar, vit all my heart.

*Eva.* A lousy knave; to have his gibes, and his mockeries. [*Exeunt.*

#### SCENE IV.—*A room in Page's House.*

*Enter FENTON and Mistress ANNE PAGE.*

*Fent.* I see, I cannot get thy father's love;  
Therefore, no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

*Anne.* Alas! how then?

*Fent.* Why, thou must be thyself.  
He doth object, I am too great of birth;



And that, my state being gall'd with my expence,  
I seek to heal it only by his wealth :  
Besides these, other bars he lays before me,——  
My riots past, my wild societies ;  
And tells me, 'tis a thing impossible  
I should love thee, but as a property.

*Anne.* May be, he tells you true.

*Fent.* No, heaven so speed me in my time to come !  
Albeit, I will confess, thy father's wealth  
Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne :  
Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value  
Than stamps in gold, or sums in sealed bags :  
And 'tis the very riches of thyself  
That now I aim at.

*Anne.* Gentle master Fenton,  
Yet seek my father's love : still seek it, sir :  
If opportunity and humblest suit  
Cannot attain it, why then.—Hark you hither.

[*They converse apart.*]

*Enter SHALLOW, SLENDER, and Mrs. QUICKLY.*

*Shal.* Break their talk, mistress Quickly ; my kinsman  
shall speak for himself.

*Slen.* I'll make a shaft or a bolt on't : slid, 'tis but  
venturing.

*Shal.* Be not dismay'd.

*Slen.* No, she shall not dismay me : I care not for  
that,—but that I am afeard.

*Quick.* Hark ye ; master Slender would speak a word  
with you.

*Anne.* I come to him.—This is my father's choice.  
O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults



Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a-year!

[*Aside.*

*Quick.* And how does good master Fenton? Pray you, a word with you.

*Shal.* She's coming; to her, coz. O boy, thou hadst a father!

*Slen.* I had a father, mistress Anne;—my uncle can tell you good jests of him:—Pray you, uncle, tell mistress Anne the jest, how my father stole two geese out of a pen, good uncle.

*Shal.* Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

*Slen.* Ay, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

*Shal.* He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

*Slen.* Ay, that I will, come cut and long-tail, under the degree of a 'squire.

*Shal.* He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure.

*Anne.* Good master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

*Shal.* Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that good comfort. She calls you, coz: I'll leave you.

*Anne.* Now, master Slender.

*Slen.* Now, good mistress Anne.

*Anne.* What is your will?

*Slen.* My will? od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest, indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank heaven; I am not such a sickly creature, I give heaven praise.

*Anne.* I mean, master Slender, what would you with me?

*Slen.* Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you: Your father, and my uncle, have made motions: if it be my luck, so: if not, happy man be his dole! They can tell you how things go,



better than I can : You may ask your father ; here he comes.

*Enter PAGE, and Mistress PAGE.*

*Page.* Now, master Slender :—Love him, daughter Anne.—

Why, how now ! what does master Fenton here ?

You wrong me, sir, thus still to haunt my house :

I told you, sir, my daughter is disposed of.

*Fent.* Nay, master Page, be not impatient.

*Mrs. Page.* Good master Fenton, come not to my child.

*Page.* She is no match for you.

*Fent.* Sir, will you hear me ?

*Page.* No, good master Fenton. Come, master Shallow ; come, son Slender ; in :— Knowing my mind, you wrong me, master Fenton.

[*Exeunt PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*

*Quick.* Speak to mistress Page.

*Fent.* Good mistress Page, for that I love your daughter

In such a righteous fashion as I do,

Perforce, against all checks, rebukes, and manners,

I must advance the colours of my love,

And not retire : Let me have your good will.

*Anne.* Good mother, do not marry me to yond' fool

*Mrs. Page.* I mean it not ; I seek you a better husband.

*Quick.* That's my master, master doctor.

*Anne.* Alas, I had rather be set quick i' th' earth,  
And bowl'd to death with turnips.

*Mrs. Page.* Come, trouble not yourself : Good master Fenton,



I will not be your friend, nor enemy :  
My daughter will I question how she loves you,  
And as I find her, so am I affected ;  
'Till then, farewell, sir :—She must needs go in ;  
Her father will be angry.

[*Exeunt Mrs. PAGE and ANNE.*

*Fent.* Farewell, gentle mistress ; farewell, Nan.

*Quick.* This is my doing now ;—Nay, said I, will you cast away your child on a fool, and a physician ? Look on master Fenton :—this is my doing.

*Fent.* I thank thee ; and I pray thee, once to-night Give my sweet Nan this ring : There's for thy pains.

[*Exit.*

*Quick.* Now heaven send thee good fortune ! A kind heart he hath : a woman would run through fire and water for such a kind heart. But yet, I would my master had mistress Anne ; or I would master Slender had her ; or, in sooth, I would master Fenton had her : I will do what I can for them all three ; for so I have promised, and I'll be as good as my word ; but speciously for master Fenton. Well, I must of another errand to sir John Falstaff from my two mistresses : What a beast am I to slack it ?

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*A room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH.*

*Fal.* Bardolph, I say,—

*Bard.* Here, sir.

*Fal.* Go fetch me a quart of sack ; put a toast in't.  
[*Exit BARD.*] Have I lived to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal ; and to be thrown into



the Thames? Well, if I be served such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out, and buttered, and give them to a dog for a new year's gift. The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drowned a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i' th' litter: and you may know by my size, that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking; if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow; a death that I abhor; for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been, when I had been swelled! I should have been a mountain of mummy.

*Re-enter BARDOLPH, with the wine.*

*Bard.* Here's mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you.

*Fal.* Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water; for my belly's as cold, as if I had swallowed snow-balls for pills to cool the reins. Call her in.

*Bard.* Come in, woman.

*Enter Mistress QUICKLY.*

*Quick.* By your leave; I cry you mercy: Give your worship good-morrow.

*Fal.* Take away these chalices: Go brew me a pottle of sack finely.

*Bard.* With eggs, sir?

*Fal.* Simple of itself; I'll no pullet-sperm in my brewage.—[*Exit BARDOLPH.*—How now?

*Quick.* Marry, sir, I come to your worship from mistress Ford.

*Fal.* Mistress Ford! I have had ford enough: I was thrown into the ford: I have my belly full of ford.



*Quick.* Alas the day ! good heart, that was not her fault : she does so take on with her men ; they mistook their erection.

*Fal.* So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman's promise.

*Quick.* Well, she laments, sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it. Her husband goes this morning a birding ; she desires you once more to come to her between eight and nine : I must carry her word quickly : she'll make you amends, I warrant you.

*Fal.* Well, I will visit her : Tell her so ; and bid her think, what a man is : let her consider his frailty, and then judge of my merit.

*Quick.* I will tell her.

*Fal.* Do so. Between nine and ten, say'st thou ?

*Quick.* Eight and nine, sir.

*Fal.* Well, be gone : I will not miss her.

*Quick.* Peace be with you, sir ! [Exit.

*Fal.* I marvel, I hear not of master Brook ; he sent me word to stay within : I like his money well. O, here he comes.

*Enter FORD.*

*Ford.* Bless you, sir !

*Fal.* Now, master Brook ? you come to know what hath passed between me and Ford's wife ?

*Ford.* That, indeed, sir John, is my business.

*Fal.* Master Brook, I will not lie to you ; I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

*Ford.* And how sped you, sir ?

*Fal.* Very ill-favouredly, master Brook.

*Ford.* How so, sir ? Did she change her determination ?

*Fal.* No, master Brook ; but the peaking cornuto



her husband, master Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealousy, comes me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embraced, kissed, protested, and, as it were, spoke the prologue of our comedy; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provoked and instigated by his distemper, and, forsooth, to search his house for his wife's love.

*Ford.* What, while you were there?

*Fal.* While I was there.

*Ford.* And did he search for you, and could not find you?

*Fal.* You shall hear. As good luck would have it, comes in one mistress Page; gives intelligence of Ford's approach; and, by her invention, and Ford's wife's distraction, they conveyed me into a buck-basket.

*Ford.* A buck-basket!

*Fal.* By the Lord, a buck-basket: rammed me in with foul shirts and smocks, socks, foul stockings, and greasy napkins; that, master Brook, there was the rankest compound of villainous smell, that ever offended nostril.

*Ford.* And how long lay you there?

*Fal.* Nay, you shall hear, master Brook, what I have suffered to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus crammed in the basket, a couple of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were called forth by their mistress, to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane: they took me on their shoulders; met the jealous knave their master in the door; who asked them once or twice what they had in their basket: I quaked for fear, lest the lunatick knave would have searched it; but fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well; on went he for a search, and away



went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, master Brook: I suffered the pangs of three several deaths: first, an intolerable fright, to be detected with a jealous rotten bell-wether: next, to be compassed, like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head: and then, to be stopped in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease: think of that,—a man of my kidney,—think of that; that am as subject to heat, as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw; it was a miracle, to 'scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stewed in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the Thames, and cooled, glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse shoe; think of that,—hissing hot,—think of that, master Brook.

*Ford.* In good sadness, sir, I am sorry that for my sake you have suffered all this. My suit then is desperate; you'll undertake her no more.

*Fal.* Master Brook, I will be thrown into Ætna, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her husband is this morning gone a birding: I have received from her another embassy of meeting; 'twixt eight and nine is the hour, master Brook.

*Ford.* 'Tis past eight already, sir.

*Fal.* Is it? I will then address me to my appointment. Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and the conclusion shall be crowned with your enjoying her: Adieu. You shall have her, master Brook; master Brook, you shall cuckold Ford. [Exit.

*Ford.* Hum! ha! is this a vision? is this a dream? do I sleep? Master Ford, awake; awake, master



Ford; there's a hole made in your best coat, master Ford. This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have linen, and buck-baskets!—Well, I will proclaim myself what I am: I will now take the lecher; he is at my house: he cannot 'scape me; 'tis impossible he should; he cannot creep into a halfpenny purse, nor into a pepper-box: but, lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places. Though what I am I cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not, shall not make me tame: if I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me, I'll be horn mad. [*Exit.*]

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## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*The Street.*

*Enter Mrs. PAGE, Mrs. QUICKLY, and WILLIAM.*

*Mrs. Page.* Is he at master Ford's already, think'st thou?

*Quick.* Sure, he is by this; or will be presently: but truly, he is very courageous mad, about his throwing into the water. Mistress Ford desires you to come suddenly.

*Mrs. Page.* I'll be with her by and by; I'll but bring my young man here to school: Look, where his master comes; 'tis a playing-day, I see.



*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS.*

How now, sir Hugh? no school to-day?

*Eva.* No; master Slender is let the boys leave to play.

*Quick.* Blessing of his heart!

*Mrs. Page.* Sir Hugh, my husband says, my son profits nothing in the world at his book; I pray you, ask him some questions in his accidence.

*Eva.* Come hither, William; hold up your head; come.

*Mrs. Page.* Come on, sirrah; hold up your head; answer your master, be not afraid.

*Eva.* William, how many numbers is in nouns?

*Will.* Two.

*Quick.* Truly, I thought there had been one number more; because they say, od's nouns.

*Eva.* Peace your tattlings. What is *fair*, William?

*Will.* *Pulcher*.

*Quick.* Poulcats! there are fairer things than poulcats, sure.

*Eva.* You are a very simplicity 'oman; I pray you, peace. What is *lapis*, William?

*Will.* A stone.

*Eva.* And what is a stone, William.

*Will.* A pebble.

*Eva.* No, it is *lapis*; I pray you remember in your prain.

*Will.* *Lapis*.

*Eva.* That is good William. What is he, William, that does lend articles?

*Will.* Articles are borrowed of the pronoun; and he thus declined, *Singulariter, nominativo, hic, hæc, hoc*.



Eva. *Nominativo, lig, hug, hog;—*pray you, mark : *genitivo, hujus* : Well, what is your *accusative case* ?

Will. *Accusativo, hinc.*

Eva. I pray you, have your remembrance, child ; *Accusativo, hing, hang, hog.*

Quick. Hang hog is Latin for bacon, I warrant you.

Eva. Leave your prabbles, 'oman. What is the *focative case*, William ?

Will. O—*vocativo, O.*

Eva. Remember, William ; *focative is, caret.*

Quick. And that's a good root.

Eva. 'Oman, forbear.

Mrs. Page. Peace.

Eva. What is your *genitive case plural*, William ?

Will. *Genitive case* ?

Eva. Ay.

Will. *Genitive,—horum, harum, horum.*

Quick. 'Vengeance of Jenny's case ! fie on her !—never name her, child, if she be a whore.

Eva. For shame, 'oman.

Quick. You do ill to teach the child such words : he teaches him to hick and to hack, which they'll do fast enough of themselves ; and to call *horum* :—fie upon you.

Eva. 'Oman, art thou lunatics ? hast thou no understandings for thy cases, and the numbers of the genders ? Thou art as foolish christian creatures as I would desires.

Mrs. Page. Pr'ythee hold thy peace.

Eva. Shew me now, William, some declensions of your pronouns.

Will. Forsooth, I have forgot.

Eva. It is *ki, kæ, cod* ; if you forget your *kies*, your



*kæs*, and your *cods*, you must be preeches. Go your ways, and play, go.

*Mrs. Page.* He is a better scholar, than I thought he was.

*Eva.* He is a good sprag memory. Farewell, mistress Page.

*Mrs. Page.* Adieu, good sir Hugh. [*Exit Sir HUGH.*] Get you home, boy.—Come, we stay too long.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in Ford's House.*

*Enter FALSTAFF and Mrs. FORD.*

*Fal.* Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance: I see, you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only, mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement, and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

*Mrs. Ford.* He's a birding, sweet sir John.

*Mrs. Page.* [*Within.*] What *hoa*, gossip Ford! what *hoa*!

*Mrs. Ford.* Step into the chamber, sir John.

[*Exit FALSTAFF*]

*Enter Mrs. PAGE.*

*Mrs. Page.* How now, sweetheart? who's at home besides yourself?

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, none but mine own people.

*Mrs. Page.* Indeed?

*Mrs. Ford.* No, certainly;—Speak louder. [*Aside*]

*Mrs. Page.* Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here.



*Mrs. Ford.* Why?

*Mrs. Page.* Why, woman, your husband is in his old lunes again: he so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffets himself on the forehead, crying, *Peer-out, peer-out!* that any madness, I ever yet beheld, seemed but tameness, civility, and patience, to this his distemper he is in now: I am glad the fat knight is not here.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, does he talk of him?

*Mrs. Page.* Of none but him; and swears, he was carried out, the last time he searched for him, in a basket: protests to my husband, he is now here; and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspicion: but I am glad the knight is not here; now he shall see his own foolery.

*Mrs. Ford.* How near is he, mistress Page?

*Mrs. Page.* Hard by; at street end; he will be here anon.

*Mrs. Ford.* I am undone!—the knight is here.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, then you are utterly shamed, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you?—Away with him, away with him; better shame than murder.

*Mrs. Ford.* Which way should he go? how should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

*Re-enter FALSTAFF.*

*Fal.* No, I'll come no more i' th' basket: May I not go out, ere he come?

*Mrs. Page.* Alas, three of master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols, that none shall issue out;



otherwise you might slip away ere he came. But what make you here?

*Fal.* What shall I do?—I'll creep up into the chimney.

*Mrs. Ford.* There they always use to discharge their barding-pieces: Creep into the kiln-hole.

*Fal.* Where is it?

*Mrs. Ford.* He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note: There is no hiding you in the house.

*Fal.* I'll go out then.

*Mrs. Page.* If you go out in your own semblance, you die, sir John. Unless you go out disguised,—

*Mrs. Ford.* How might we disguise him?

*Mrs. Page.* Alas the day, I know not. There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwise, he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and so escape.

*Fal.* Good hearts, devise something: any extremity, rather than a mischief.

*Mrs. Ford.* My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

*Mrs. Page.* On my word, it will serve him; she's as big as he is: and there's her thrum'd hat, and her muffler too: Run up, sir John.

*Mrs. Ford.* Go, go, sweet sir John: mistress Page and I, will look some linen for your head.

*Mrs. Page.* Quick, quick; we'll come dress you straight: put on the gown the while.

[*Exit FALSTAFF*

*Mrs. Ford.* I would, my husband would meet him in this shape: he cannot abide the old woman of



Brentford ; he swears, she's a witch ; forbade her my house, and hath threatened to beat her.

*Mrs. Page.* Heaven guide him to thy husband's cudgel ; and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards !

*Mrs. Ford.* But is my husband coming ?

*Mrs. Page.* Ay, in good sadness, is he ; and talks of the basket too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

*Mrs. Ford.* We'll try that ; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

*Mrs. Page.* Nay, but he'll be here presently : let's go dress him like the witch of Brentford.

*Mrs. Ford.* I'll first direct my men, what they shall do with the basket. Go up, I'll bring linen for him straight. *[Exit.*

*Mrs. Page.* Hang him, dishonest varlet ! we cannot misuse him enough.

We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do,  
Wives may be merry, and yet honest too :  
We do not act, that often jest and laugh ;  
Tis old but true, *Still swine eat all the draff.* *[Exit.*

*Re-enter Mrs. FORD, with two Servants.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Go, sirs, take the basket again on your shoulders ; your master is hard at door ; if he bid you set it down, obey him : quickly, despatch. *[Exit.*

1 *Serv.* Come, come, take it up.

2 *Serv.* Pray heaven, it be not full of the knight again.

1 *Serv.* I hope not ; I had as lief bear so much lead.



*Enter FORD, PAGE, SHALLOW, CAIUS, and Sir HUGH EVANS.*

*Ford.* Ay, but if it prove true, master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again?—Set down the basket, villain:—Somebody call my wife:—You, youth in a basket, come out here!—O, you panderly rascals! there's a knot, a ging, a pack, a conspiracy against me: Now shall the devil be shamed. What! wife, I say! come, come forth; behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching.

*Page.* Why, this passes! Master Ford, you are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinioned.

*Eva.* Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog!

*Shal.* Indeed, master Ford, this is not well; indeed.

*Enter Mrs. FORD.*

*Ford.* So say I too, sir.—Come hither, mistress Ford; mistress Ford, the honest woman, the modest wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband!—I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven be my witness, you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

*Ford.* Well said, brazen-face; hold it out.—Come forth, sirrah. [*Pulls the clothes out of the basket.*]

*Page.* This passes!

*Mrs. Ford.* Are you not ashamed? let the clothes alone.

*Ford.* I shall find you anon.

*Eva.* 'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.



*Ford.* Empty the basket, I say.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, man, why,—

*Ford.* Master Page, as I am a man, there was one conveyed out of my house yesterday in this basket: Why may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is: my intelligence is true; my jealousy is reasonable: Pluck me out all the linen.

*Mrs. Ford.* If you find a man there, he shall die a flea's death.

*Page.* Here's no man.

*Shal.* By my fidelity, this is not well, master Ford; this wrongs you.

*Eva.* Master Ford, you must pray, and not follow the imaginations of your own heart: this is jealousies.

*Ford.* Well, he's not here I seek for.

*Page.* No, nor no where else, but in your brain.

*Ford.* Help to search my house this one time: If I find not what I seek, show no colour for my extremity, let me for ever be your table-sport; let them say of me, As jealous as Ford, that searched a hollow walnut for his wife's leman. Satisfy me once more; once more search with me.

*Mrs. Ford.* What hoa, mistress Page! come you, and the old woman, down; my husband will come into the chamber.

*Ford.* Old woman! What old woman's that?

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, it is my maid's aunt of Brentford.

*Ford.* A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by the figure, and such daubery as this is; beyond our



element : we know nothing.—Come down, you witch, you hag you ; come down I say.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, good, sweet husband ;—good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman.

*Enter FALSTAFF in women's clothes, led by Mrs. PAGE.*

*Mrs. Page.* Come, mother Prat, come, give me your nand.

*Ford.* I'll prat her :—Out of my door, you witch !  
[beats him] you rag, you baggage, you polecat, you ronyon ! out ! out ! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you. [Exit FALSTAFF.]

*Mrs. Page.* Are you not ashamed ? I think, you have killed the poor woman.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, he will do it :—'Tis a goodly credit for you.

*Ford.* Hang her, witch !

*Eva.* By yea and no, I think, the 'oman is a witch indeed : I like not when a 'oman has a great peard ; I spy a great peard under her muffler.

*Ford.* Will you follow, gentlemen ? I beseech you, follow ; see but the issue of my jealousy : if I cry out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again.

*Page.* Let's obey his humour a little further : Come, gentlemen. [Exeunt PAGE, FORD, SHALLOW, and EVANS.]

*Mrs. Page.* Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, by the mass, that he did not ; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

*Mrs. Page.* I'll have the cudgel hallowed, and hang o'er the altar ; it hath done meritorious service.

*Mrs. Ford.* What think you ? May we, with the warrant of womanhood, and the witness of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge ?



*Mrs. Page.* The spirit of wantonness is, sure, scared out of him; if the devil have him not in fee simple, with fine and recovery, he will never, I think, in the way of waste, attempt us again.

*Mrs. Ford.* Shall we tell our husbands how we have served him?

*Mrs. Page.* Yes, by all means; if it be but to scrape the figures out of your husband's brains. If they can find in their hearts, the poor unvirtuous fat knight shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the ministers.

*Mrs. Ford.* I'll warrant, they'll have him publicly shamed: and, methinks, there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly shamed.

*Mrs. Page.* Come, to the forge with it then, shape it: I would not have things cool. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter Host and BARDOLPH.*

*Bard.* Sir, the Germans desire to have three of your horses: the duke himself will be to-morrow at court, and they are going to meet him.

*Host.* What duke should that be, comes so secretly? I hear not of him in the court: Let me speak with the gentlemen; they speak English?

*Bard.* Ay, sir; I'll call them to you.

*Host.* They shall have my horses; but I'll make them pay, I'll sauce them: they have had my houses a week at command; I have turned away my other guests: they must come off; I'll sauce them: Come.

[Exeunt.]



SCENE IV.—*A room in Ford's house.*

*Enter* PAGE, FORD, *Mrs.* PAGE, *Mrs.* FORD, and *Sir*  
HUGH EVANS.

*Eva.* 'Tis one of the pest discretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

*Page.* And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

*Mrs. Page.* Within a quarter of an hour.

*Ford.* Pardon me, wife: Henceforth do what thou wilt;

I rather will suspect the sun with cold,  
Than thee with wantonness: now doth thy honour stand,

In him that was of late an heretick,  
As firm as faith.

*Page.* 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more.  
Be not as extreme in submission,  
As in offence;

But let our plot go forward: let our wives  
Yet once again, to make us publick sport,  
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,  
Where we may take him, and disgrace him for it.

*Ford.* There is no better way than that they spoke of.

*Page.* How! to send him word they'll meet him in the park at midnight! fie, fie; he'll never come.

*Eva.* You say, he has been thrown into the rivers; and has been grievously peaten, as an old 'oman methinks, there should be terrors in him, that he should not come; methinks, his flesh is punished, he shall have no desires



*Page.* So think I too.

*Mrs. Ford.* Devise but how you'll use him when he comes,

And let us two devise to bring him thither.

*Mrs. Page.* There is an old tale goes, that Herne the hunter,

Sometime a keeper here in Windsor Forest,  
Doth all the winter time, at still midnight,  
Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;  
And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle;  
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a chain  
In a most hideous and dreadful manner:  
You have heard of such a spirit; and well you know,  
The superstitious idle-headed eld  
Receiv'd and did deliver to our age,  
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.

*Page.* Why, yet there want not many, that do fear  
In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak:  
But what of this?

*Mrs. Ford.* Marry, this is our device;  
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us,  
Disguis'd like Herne, with huge horns on his head.

*Page.* Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,  
And in this shape: When you have brought him  
thither,

What shall be done with him? what is your plot?

*Mrs. Page.* That likewise have we thought upon,  
and thus:

Nan Page my daughter, and my little son,  
And three or four more of their growth, we'll dress  
Like urchins, ouphes, and fairies, green and white,  
With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads,  
And rattles in their hands; upon a sudden,



As Falstaff, she, and I, are newly met,  
Let them from forth a saw-pit rush at once  
With some diffused song; upon their sight,  
We two in great amazedness will fly:  
Then let them all encircle him about,  
And, fairy-like, to-pinch the unclean knight;  
And ask him, why, that hour of fairy revel,  
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread,  
In shape profane.

*Mrs. Ford.* And till he tell the truth,  
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound,  
And burn him with their tapers.

*Mrs. Page.* The truth being known,  
We'll all present ourselves; dis-horn the spirit,  
And mock him home to Windsor.

*Ford.* The children must  
Be practis'd well to this, or they'll ne'er do't.

*Eva.* I will teach the children their behaviours; and  
I will be like a jack-an-apes also, to burn the knight  
with my taber.

*Ford.* That will be excellent. I'll go buy them  
vizards.

*Mrs. Page.* My Nan shall be the queen of all the  
fairies,  
Finely attired in a robe of white.

*Page.* That silk will I go buy;—and in that time  
Shall master Slender steal my Nan away, [*Aside*  
And marry her at Eton.——Go, send to Falstaff  
straight.

*Ford.* Nay, I'll to him again in name of Brook:  
He'll tell me all his purpose: Sure, he'll come.

*Mrs. Page.* Fear not you that: Go, get us properties  
And tricking for our fairies.



*Eva.* Let us about it; It is admirable pleasures, and fery honest knaveries.

[*Exeunt* PAGE, FORD, and EVANS.]

*Mrs. Page.* Go, mistress Ford,  
Send Quickly to sir John, to know his mind.

[*Exit* Mrs. FORD.]

I'll to the doctor; he hath my good will,  
And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.  
That Slender, though well landed, is an idiot;  
And he my husband best of all affects:  
The doctor is well money'd, and his friends  
Potent at court; he, none but he, shall have her,  
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.  
[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*A room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter* Host and SIMPLE.

*Host.* What would'st thou have, boor? what, thick-skin? speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick, snap.

*Sim.* Marry, sir, I come to speak with sir John Falstaff from master Slender.

*Host.* There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing-bed, and truckle-bed; 'tis painted about with the story of the prodigal, fresh and new: Go, knock and call; he'll speak like an *Anthropophaginian* unto thee: Knock, I say.

*Sim.* There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber; I'll be so bold as stay, sir, till she come down: I come to speak with her, indeed.

*Host.* Ha! a fat woman! the knight may be robbed:



I'll call.—Bully knight! Bully sir John! speak from thy lungs military: Art thou there? it is thine host, thine Ephesian, calls.

*Fal.* [*above.*] How now, mine host?

*Host.* Here's a Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman: Let her descend, bully, let her descend; my chambers are honourable: Fye! privacy? fye!

*Enter FALSTAFF.*

*Fal.* There was, mine host, an old fat woman even now with me; but she's gone.

*Sim.* Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brentford?

*Fal.* Ay, marry, was it, muscle-shell; What would you with her?

*Sim.* My master, sir, my master Slender, sent to her, seeing her go through the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguiled him of a chain had the chain, or no.

*Fal.* I spake with the old woman about it.

*Sim.* And what says she, I pray, sir?

*Fal.* Marry, she says, that the very same man, that beguiled master Slender of his chain, cozened him of it.

*Sim.* I would, I could have spoken with the woman herself; I had other things to have spoken with her too, from him.

*Fal.* What are they? let us know.

*Host.* Ay, come; quick.

*Sim.* I may not conceal them, sir.

*Fal.* Conceal them, or thou diest.

*Sim.* Why, sir, they were nothing but about mistress



Anne Page; to know, if it were my master's fortune to have her, or no.

*Fal.* 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

*Sim.* What, sir?

*Fal.* To have her,—or no: Go; say, the woman told me so.

*Sim.* May I be so bold to say so, sir?

*Fal.* Ay, sir Tike; who more bold?

*Sim.* I thank your worship: I shall make my master glad with these tidings. *[Exit SIMPLE.]*

*Host.* Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, sir John: Was there a wise woman with thee?

*Fal.* Ay, that there was, mine host; one, that hath taught me more wit than ever I learned before in my life: and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

*Enter BARDOLPH.*

*Bard.* Out, alas, sir! cozenage! meer cozenage!

*Host.* Where be my horses? speak well of them, varletto.

*Bard.* Run away with the cozeners: for so soon as I came beyond Eton, they threw me off, from behind one of them, in a slough of mire; and set spurs, and away, like three German devils, three Doctor Faustuses.

*Host.* They are gone but to meet the duke, villain: do not say, they be fled; Germans are honest men.

*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS.*

*Eva.* Where is mine host?

*Host.* What is the matter, sir?

*Eva.* Have a care of your entertainments: there is a



friend of mine come to town, tells me, there is three couzin germans, that has cozened all the hosts of Readings, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good-will, look you: you are wise, and full of gibes and vlouting stogs; and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened: Fare you well.

[*Exit*

*Enter Doctor CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vere is mine *Host de Jarterre*?

*Host.* Here, master doctor, in perplexity, and doubtful dilemma.

*Caius.* I cannot tell vat is dat: But it is tell-a me, dat you make grand preparation for a duke *de Jarmany*: by my trot, dere is no duke, dat de court is know to come: I tell you for good vill: adieu. [*Exit*

*Host.* Hue and cry, villain, go:—assist me, knight; I am undone:—fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone!

[*Exit Host and BARDOLPH.*

*Fal.* I would, all the world might be cozened; for I have been cozened, and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court, how I have been transformed, and how my transformation hath been washed and cudgeled, they would melt me out of my fat, drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me; I warrant, they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as crest-fallen as a dried pear. I never prospered since I foreswore myself at *primero*. Well if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers I would repent.—

*Enter Mistress QUICKLY.*

Now! whence come you?



*Quick.* From the two parties, forsooth.

*Fal.* The devil take one party, and his dam the other, and so they shall be both bestowed! I have suffered more for their sakes, more, than the villainous inconstancy of man's disposition is able to bear.

*Quick.* And have not they suffered? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

*Fal.* What tell'st thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford; but that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, deliver'd me, the knave constable had set me i' th' stocks, i' th' common stocks, for a witch.

*Quick.* Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber: you shall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so crossed.

*Fal.* Come up into my chamber. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Another room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter FENTON and Host.*

*Host.* Master Fenton, talk not to me; my mind is heavy, I will give over all.

*Fent.* Yet hear me speak: Assist me in my purpose, And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee A hundred pound in gold, more than your loss.



*Host.* I will hear you, master Fenton ; and I will, at the least, keep your counsel.

*Fent.* From time to time I have acquainted you  
With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page ;  
Who, mutually, hath answer'd my affection  
(So far forth as herself might be her chooser,)  
Even to my wish : I have a letter from her  
Of such contents as you will wonder at ;  
The mirth whereof so larded with my matter,  
That neither, singly, can be manifested,  
Without the show of both ;—wherein fat Falstaff  
Hath a great scene : the image of the jest

*[Showing the letter]*

I'll show you here at large. Hark, good mine host :  
To-night at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,  
Must my sweet Nan present the fairy queen ;  
The purpose why, is here ; in which disguise,  
While other jests are something rank on foot,  
Her father hath commanded her to slip  
Away with Slender, and with him at Eton  
Immediately to marry : she hath consented :  
Now, sir,  
Her mother, even strong against that match,  
And firm for doctor Caius, hath appointed  
That he shall likewise shuffle her away,  
While other sports are tasking of their minds,  
And at the deanery, where a priest attends,  
Straight marry her : to this her mother's plot  
She, seemingly obedient, likewise hath  
Made promise to the doctor ;—Now, thus it rests :  
Her father means she shall be all in white ;  
And in that habit, when Slender sees his time  
To take her by the hand, and bid her go,



She shall go with him:—her mother hath intended,  
The better to denote her to the doctor,  
(For they must all be mask'd and vizarded,)  
That, quaint in green, she shall be loose enrob'd,  
With ribbands pendant, flaring 'bout her head;  
And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe,  
To pinch her by the hand, and, on that token,  
The maid hath given consent to go with him.

*Host.* Which means she to deceive? father or mother?

*Fent.* Both, my good host, to go along with me:  
And here it rests,—that you'll procure the vicar  
To stay for me at church, 'twixt twelve and one,  
And, in the lawful name of marrying,  
To give our hearts united ceremony.

*Host.* Well, husband your device; I'll to the vicar:  
Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

*Fent.* So shall I evermore be bound to thee;  
Besides, I'll make a present recompense. [*Exeunt.*

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## ACT V.

### SCENE I.—*A room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter FALSTAFF and Mrs. QUICKLY.*

*Fal.* Pr'ythee, no more prattling;—go.—I'll hold:  
This is the third time; I hope, good luck lies in odd  
numbers. Away, go; they say, there is divinity in  
odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death.—  
Away.



*Quick.* I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

*Fal.* Away, I say; time wears: hold up your head, and mince. [*Exit Mrs. QUICKLY.*]

*Enter FORD.*

How now, master Brook? Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you in the Park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

*Ford.* Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as you told me you had appointed?

*Fal.* I went to her, master Brook, as you see, like a poor old man: but I came from her, master Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave, Ford her husband, hath the finest mad devil of jealousy in him, master Brook, that ever governed frenzy. I will tell you.—He beat me grievously, in the shape of a woman; for in the shape of man, master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a weaver's beam; because I know also, life is a shuttle. I am in haste; go along with me; I'll tell you all, master Brook. Since I plucked geese, played truant, and whipped top, I knew not what it was to be beaten, till lately. Follow me: I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford: on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hand.—Follow: Strange things in hand, master Brook! follow. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Windsor Park.*

*Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*

*Page.* Come, come; we'll couch i' th' castle-ditch,



till we see the light of our fairies.—Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

*Slen.* Ay, forsooth; I have spoke with her, and we have a nay-word, how to know one another. I come to her in white, and cry, *mum*; she cries, *budget*; and by that we know one another.

*Shal.* That's good too: but what needs either your *mum*, or her *budget*? the white will decipher her well enough.—It hath struck ten o'clock.

*Page.* The night is dark; light and spirits will become it well. Heaven prosper our sport! No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away; follow me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The street in Windsor.*

*Enter Mrs. PAGE, Mrs. FORD, and Dr. CAIUS.*

*Mrs. Page.* Master doctor, my daughter is in green: when you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and despatch it quickly: Go before into the Park; we two must go together.

*Caius.* I know vat I have to do; Adieu.

*Mrs. Page.* Fare you well, sir. [*Exit CAIUS.*] My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of Falstaff, as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter: but 'tis no matter; better a little chiding, than a great deal of heart-break.

*Mrs. Ford.* Where is Nan now, and her troop of fairies? and the Welch devil, Hugh?

*Mrs. Page.* They are all couched in a pit hard by Herne's oak, with obscured lights; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.



*Mrs. Ford.* That cannot choose but amaze him.

*Mrs. Page.* If he be not amazed, he will be mocked; if he be amazed, he will every way be mocked.

*Mrs. Ford.* We'll betray him finely.

*Mrs. Page.* Against such lewdsters, and their lechery, Those that betray them do no treachery.

*Mrs. Ford.* The hour draws on; To the oak, to the oak! [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE IV.—*Windsor Park.*

*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS, and Fairies.*

*Eva.* Trib, trib, fairies; come; and remember your parts: be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit; and when I give the watch-ords, do as I bid you; Come, come; trib, trib. [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE V.—*Another part of the Park.*

*Enter FALSTAFF disguised, with a buck's head on.*

*Fal.* The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the minute draws on: Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me:—Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns.—O powerful love! that, in some respects, makes a beast a man; in some other, a man a beast.—You were also, Jupiter, a swan, for the love of Leda;—O, omnipotent love! how near the god drew to the complexion of a goose?—A fault done first in the form of a beast;—O Jove, a beastly fault! and then another fault in the semblance of a fowl; think on't, Jove; a foul fault—When gods have



hot backs, what shall poor men do? For me, I am here a Windsor stag; and the fattest, I think, i' th' forest: Send me a cool rut-time, Jove, or who can blame me to piss my tallow? Who comes here? my doe?

*Enter Mrs. FORD and Mrs. PAGE.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Sir John? art thou there, my deer? my male deer?

*Fal.* My doe with the black scut?—Let the sky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of *Green Sleeves*; hail kissing-comfits, and snow eringoes; let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here. *[Embracing her.]*

*Mrs. Ford.* Mistress Page is come with me, sweetheart.

*Fal.* Divide me like a bribe-buck, each a haunch: I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman? ha! Speak I like Herne the hunter?—Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome! *[Noise within.]*

*Mrs. Page.* Alas! what noise?

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven forgive our sins!

*Fal.* What should this be?

*Mrs. Ford.* } Away, away. *[They run off.]*  
*Mrs. Page.* }

*Fal.* I think, the devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire; he would never else cross me thus.



*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS, like a satyr; Mrs. QUICKLY, and PISTOL; ANNE PAGE, as the Fairy Queen, attended by her brother and others, dressed like fairies, with waxen tapers on their heads.*

*Quick.* Fairies, black, grey, green, and white,  
You moon-shine revellers, and shades of night,  
You orphan-heirs of fixed destiny,  
Attend your office, and your quality.—  
*Crier Hobgoblin, make the fairy o-yes.*

*Pist.* Elves, list your names; silence, you airy toys.  
*Cricket,* to Windsor chimnies shalt thou leap:  
Where fires thou find'st unrak'd, and hearths unswept,  
There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry:  
Our radiant queen hates sluts, and sluttery.

*Fal.* They are fairies; he, that speaks to them, shall  
die:  
I'll wink and couch: No man their works must eye.  
[Lies down upon his face.]

*Eva.* Where's *Pede*?—Go you, and where you find a  
maid,  
That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said,  
Raise up the organs of her fantasy,  
Sleep she as sound as careless infancy;  
But those as sleep, and think not on their sins,  
Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and  
shins.

*Quick.* About, about;  
Search Windsor castle, elves, within and out:  
Strew good luck, ouches, on every sacred room;  
That it may stand till the perpetual doom,  
In state as wholesome, as in state 'tis fit;  
Worthy the owner, and the owner it.



The several chairs of order look you scour  
With juice of balm, and every precious flower :  
Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,  
With loyal blazon, evermore be blest !  
And nightly, meadow-fairies, look, you sing,  
Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring :  
Th' expressure that it bears, green let it be,  
More fertile-fresh than all the field to see ;  
And, *Hony soit qui mal y pense*, write,  
In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white ;  
Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,  
Buckled below fair knight-hood's bending knee :  
Fairies use flowers for their charactery. }  
Away ; disperse : But, till 'tis one o'clock,  
Our dance of custom, round about the oak  
Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

*Eva.* Pray you, lock hand in hand ; yourselves in  
order set :

And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,  
To guide our measure round about the tree.  
But, stay ; I smell a man of middle earth.

*Fal.* Heavens defend me from that Welch fairy ! lest  
he transform me to a piece of cheese !

*Pist.* Vile worm, thou wast o'er-look'd even in thy  
birth.

*Quick.* With trial-fire touch me his finger-end :  
If he be chaste, the flame will back descend,  
And turn him to no pain ; but if he start,  
It is the flesh of a corrupted heart.

*Pist.* A trial, come.

*Eva.* Come, will this wood take fire ?

[*They burn him with their tapers*]

*Fal.* Oh, oh, oh !



*Quick.* Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire !  
About him, fairies ; sing a scornful rhyme :  
And, as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

*Eva.* It is right ; indeed he is full of lecheries and iniquity.

## SONG.

*Fye on sinful fantasy !  
Fye on lust and luxury !  
Lust is but a bloody fire,  
Kindled with unchaste desire,  
Fed in heart ; whose flames aspire,  
As thoughts do blow them, higher and higher.  
Pinch him, fairies, mutually ;  
Pinch him for his villainy ;  
Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,  
Till candles, and star-light, and moonshine be out.*

*During this song, the fairies pinch Falstaff. Doctor Caius comes one way, and steals away a fairy in green ; Siender another way, and takes off a fairy in white ; and Fenton comes, and steals away Mrs. Anne Page. A noise of hunting is made within. All the fairies run away. Falstaff pulls off his buck's head, and rises.*

*Enter PAGE, FORD, Mrs. PAGE, and Mrs. FORD. They lay hold on him.*

*Page.* Nay, do not fly : I think, we have watch'd you now ;

Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn ?

*Mrs. Page.* I pray you, come ; hold up the jest no higher :—

Now, good sir John, how like you Windsor wives ?  
See you these, husband ? do not these fair yokes  
Be come the forest better than the town ?



*Ford.* Now, sir, who's a cuckold now?—Master Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; here are his horns, master Brook: And, master Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds of money; which must be paid to master Brook; his horses are arrested for it, master Brook.

*Mrs. Ford.* Sir John, we have had ill luck; we could never meet. I will never take you for my love again, but I will always count you my deer.

*Fal.* I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass.

*Ford.* Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

*Fal.* And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought, they were not fairies: and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprize of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were fairies. See now, how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

*Eva.* Sir John Falstaff, serve Got, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

*Ford.* Well said, fairy Hugh.

*Eva.* And leave you your jealousies too, I pray you.

*Ford.* I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English.

*Fal.* Have I laid my brain in the sun, and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welch goat too? Shall I have a coxcomb of frize? 'tis time I were choked with a piece of toasted cheese.

*Eva.* Seese is not good to give putter; your pelly is all putter.

*Fal.* Seese and putter! have I lived to stand at the



taunt of one that makes fritters of English? This is enough to be the decay of lust and late-walking, through the realm.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, and have given ourselves without scruple to hell, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

*Ford.* What, a hodge-pudding? a bag of flax?

*Mrs. Page.* A puffed man?

*Page.* Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails?

*Ford.* And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

*Page.* And as poor as Job?

*Ford.* And as wicked as his wife?

*Eva.* And given to fornications, and to taverns, and sack, and wine, and metheglins, and to drinkings, and swearings, and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

*Fal.* Well, I am your theme: you have the start of me; I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welch flannel: ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me: use me as you will.

*Ford.* Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pander: over and above that you have suffered, I think, to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, husband, let that go to make amends:

Forgive that sum, and so we'll all be friends.

*Ford.* Well, here's my hand; all's forgiven at last.

*Page.* Yet be cheerful, knight: thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee



to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee: Tell her, master Slender hath married her daughter.

*Mrs. Page.* Doctors doubt that: If Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this, doctor Caius' wife. [*Aside.*]

*Enter SLENDER.*

*Slen.* Whoo, ho! ho! father Page!

*Page.* Son! how now? how now, son? have you despatched?

*Slen.* Despatched!—I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't; would I were hanged, la, else.

*Page.* Of what, son?

*Slen.* I came yonder at Eton to marry mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy: If it had not been i' th' church, I would have swung him, or he should have swung me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir, and tis a post-master's boy.

*Page.* Upon my life then you took the wrong.

*Slen.* What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl: If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

*Page.* Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you, how you should know my daughter by her garments?

*Slen.* I went to her in white, and cry'd, *mum*, and she cryed *budget*, as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a post-master's boy.

*Eva.* Jeshu! Master Slender, cannot you see but marry boys?

*Page.* O, I am vexed at heart: What shall I do?

*Mrs. Page.* Good George, be not angry: I knew of



your purpose ; turned my daughter into green ; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

*Enter CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vere is mistress Page ? By gar, I am cozened ; I ha' married *un garçon*, a boy ; *un paisan*, by gar, a boy ; it is not Anne Page : by gar, I am cozened.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, did you take her in green ?

*Caius.* Ay, be gar, and 'tis a boy : be gar, I'll raise all Windsor. [*Exit CAIUS.*]

*Ford.* This is strange : Who hath got the right Anne ?

*Page.* My heart misgives me : Here comes master Fenton.

*Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE.*

How now, master Fenton ?

*Anne.* Pardon, good father ! good my mother, pardon !

*Page.* Now, mistress ? how chance you went not with master Slender ?

*Mrs. Page.* Why went you not with master doctor, maid ?

*Fent.* You do amaze her : Hear the truth of it. You would have married her most shamefully, Where there was no proportion held in love. The truth is, She and I, long since contracted, Are now so sure, that nothing can dissolve us. The offence is holy, that she hath committed : And this deceit loses the name of craft, Of disobedience, or unduteous title ; Since therein she doth evitate and shun



A thousand irreligious cursed hours,  
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her

*Ford.* Stand not amaz'd : here is no remedy :—

In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state ;  
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.

*Fal.* I am glad, though you have ta'en a special  
stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced.

*Page.* Well, what remedy ? Fenton, heaven give  
thee joy !

What cannot be eschew'd, must be embrac'd.

*Fal.* When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are  
chas'd.

*Eva.* I will dance and eat plums at your wedding.

*Mrs. Page.* Well, I will muse no further :—Master  
Fenton,

Heaven give you many, many merry days !—  
Good husband, let us every one go home,  
And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire ;  
Sir John and all.

*Ford.* Let it be so :—Sir John,  
To master Brook you yet shall hold your word ;  
For he, to-night, shall lie with mistress Ford.

[*Exeunt.*



A thousand irreligious cursed hours,  
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her  
Lord. Stand not amazed: there is no remedy:—  
In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state;  
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.  
For I am glad, though you have taken a special  
stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced.  
Page. Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give  
these joy!  
What remedy be each of us must be embraced.  
For when night-dogs run, all sorts of dogs are  
chased.  
For I will dance and eat plums at your wedding.  
And Page. Well, I will name no further.—  
Fenton,  
Heaven give you many merry days!—  
Good husband, let us every one go home,  
And leave this sport of a country here;  
Sir John and all.  
Lord, let it be so:—Sir John,  
To master Brook you yet shall hold your word;  
For he to night shall be with mistress Ford.  
[Exit Lord.]  
It is thus and so, and so and so, and so,  
The female goes and leaves the male to go;  
And at that moment in the world's great  
Lovers are made good, I say, at that only  
An ordered one, and that is all, as men are  
Contented that the world is made all  
And so to some end goes the world  
Of this condition, so, so, so, so,  
And the state of the world is so.



# TWELFTH-NIGHT:

OR,

## WHAT YOU WILL.



friend of mine come to town, tells me, there is three couzin germans, that has cozened all the hosts of Readings, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good-will, look you: you are wise, and full of gibes and vlouting stogs; and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened: Fare you well.

[*Exit*

*Enter Doctor CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vere is mine *Host de Jarterre*?

*Host.* Here, master doctor, in perplexity, and doubtful dilemma.

*Caius.* I cannot tell vat is dat: But it is tell-a me, dat you make grand preparation for a duke *de Jarmany*: by my trot, dere is no duke, dat de court is know to come: I tell you for good vill: adieu. [*Exit*

*Host.* Hue and cry, villain, go:—assist me, knight; I am undone:—fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone! [*Exit Host and BARDOLPH.*

*Fal.* I would, all the world might be cozened; for I have been cozened, and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court, how I have been transformed, and how my transformation hath been washed and cudgeled, they would melt me out of my fat, drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me; I warrant, they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as crest-fallen as a dried pear. I never prospered since I foreswore myself at *primero*. Well if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers I would repent.—

*Enter Mistress QUICKLY.*

Now! whence come you?



*Quick.* From the two parties, forsooth.

*Fal.* The devil take one party, and his dam the other, and so they shall be both bestowed! I have suffered more for their sakes, more, than the villainous inconstancy of man's disposition is able to bear.

*Quick.* And have not they suffered? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

*Fal.* What tell'st thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford; but that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, deliver'd me, the knave constable had set me i' th' stocks, i' th' common stocks, for a witch.

*Quick.* Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber: you shall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so crossed.

*Fal.* Come up into my chamber. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VI.—*Another room in the Garter Inn.*

*Enter FENTON and Host.*

*Host.* Master Fenton, talk not to me; my mind is heavy, I will give over all.

*Fent.* Yet hear me speak: Assist me in my purpose, And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee A hundred pound in gold, more than your loss.



*Host.* I will hear you, master Fenton ; and I will, at the least, keep your counsel.

*Fent.* From time to time I have acquainted you  
With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page ;  
Who, mutually, hath answer'd my affection  
(So far forth as herself might be her chooser,)  
Even to my wish : I have a letter from her  
Of such contents as you will wonder at ;  
The mirth whereof so larded with my matter,  
That neither, singly, can be manifested,  
Without the show of both ;—wherein fat Falstaff  
Hath a great scene : the image of the jest

[*Showing the letter*

I'll show you here at large. Hark, good mine host :  
To-night at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,  
Must my sweet Nan present the fairy queen ;  
The purpose why, is here ; in which disguise,  
While other jests are something rank on foot,  
Her father hath commanded her to slip  
Away with Slender, and with him at Eton  
Immediately to marry : she hath consented :  
Now, sir,  
Her mother, even strong against that match,  
And firm for doctor Caius, hath appointed  
That he shall likewise shuffle her away,  
While other sports are tasking of their minds,  
And at the deanery, where a priest attends,  
Straight marry her : to this her mother's plot  
She, seemingly obedient, likewise hath  
Made promise to the doctor ;—Now, thus it rests :  
Her father means she shall be all in white ;  
And in that habit, when Slender sees his time  
To take her by the hand, and bid her go,



She shall go with him:—her mother hath intended,  
The better to denote her to the doctor,  
(For they must all be mask'd and vizarded,)  
That, quaint in green, she shall be loose enrob'd,  
With ribbands pendant, flaring 'bout her head;  
And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe,  
To pinch her by the hand, and, on that token,  
The maid hath given consent to go with him.

*Host.* Which means she to deceive? father or mother?

*Fent.* Both, my good host, to go along with me:  
And here it rests,—that you'll procure the vicar  
To stay for me at church, 'twixt twelve and one,  
And, in the lawful name of marrying,  
To give our hearts united ceremony.

*Host.* Well, husband your device; I'll to the vicar:  
Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

*Fent.* So shall I evermore be bound to thee;  
Besides, I'll make a present recompense. [*Exeunt.*

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## ACT V.

### SCENE I.—A room in the Garter Inn.

*Enter FALSTAFF and Mrs. QUICKLY.*

*Fal.* Pr'ythee, no more prattling;—go.—I'll hold:  
This is the third time; I hope, good luck lies in odd  
numbers. Away, go; they say, there is divinity in  
odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death.—  
Away.



*Quick.* I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

*Fal.* Away, I say; time wears: hold up your head, and mince. [*Exit Mrs. QUICKLY.*]

*Enter FORD.*

How now, master Brook? Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you in the Park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

*Ford.* Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as you told me you had appointed?

*Fal.* I went to her, master Brook, as you see, like a poor old man: but I came from her, master Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave, Ford her husband, hath the finest mad devil of jealousy in him, master Brook, that ever governed frenzy. I will tell you.—He beat me grievously, in the shape of a woman; for in the shape of man, master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a weaver's beam; because I know also, life is a shuttle. I am in haste; go along with me; I'll tell you all, master Brook. Since I plucked geese, played truant, and whipped top, I knew not what it was to be beaten, till lately. Follow me: I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford: on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hand.—Follow: Strange things in hand, master Brook! follow. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Windsor Park.*

*Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*

*Page.* Come, come; we'll couch i' th' castle-ditch,



till we see the light of our fairies.—Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

*Slen.* Ay, forsooth ; I have spoke with her, and we have a nay-word, how to know one another. I come to her in white, and cry, *mum* ; she cries, *budget* ; and by that we know one another.

*Shal.* That's good too : but what needs either your *mum*, or her *budget* ? the white will decipher her well enough.—It hath struck ten o'clock.

*Page.* The night is dark ; light and spirits will become it well. Heaven prosper our sport ! No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away ; follow me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The street in Windsor.*

*Enter Mrs. PAGE, Mrs. FORD, and Dr. CAIUS.*

*Mrs. Page.* Master doctor, my daughter is in green : when you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and despatch it quickly : Go before into the Park ; we two must go together.

*Caius.* I know vat I have to do ; Adieu.

*Mrs. Page.* Fare you well, sir. [*Exit CAIUS.*] My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of Falstaff, as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter : but 'tis no matter ; better a little chiding, than a great deal of heart-break.

*Mrs. Ford.* Where is Nan now, and her troop of fairies ? and the Welch devil, Hugh ?

*Mrs. Page.* They are all couched in a pit hard by Herne's oak, with obscured lights ; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.



*Mrs. Ford.* That cannot choose but amaze him.

*Mrs. Page.* If he be not amazed, he will be mocked; if he be amazed, he will every way be mocked.

*Mrs. Ford.* We'll betray him finely.

*Mrs. Page.* Against such lewdsters, and their lechery, Those that betray them do no treachery.

*Mrs. Ford.* The hour draws on; To the oak, to the oak! [Exeunt.

#### SCENE IV.—*Windsor Park.*

*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS, and Fairies.*

*Eva.* Trib, trib, fairies; come; and remember your parts: be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit; and when I give the watch-ords, do as I bid you; Come, come; trib, trib. [Exeunt.

#### SCENE V.—*Another part of the Park.*

*Enter FALSTAFF disguised, with a buck's head on.*

*Fal.* The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the minute draws on: Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me:—Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns.—O powerful love! that, in some respects, makes a beast a man; in some other, a man a beast.—You were also, Jupiter, a swan, for the love of Leda;—O, omnipotent love! how near the god drew to the complexion of a goose?—A fault done first in the form of a beast;—O Jove, a beastly fault! and then another fault in the semblance of a fowl; think on't, Jove; a foul fault—When gods have



hot backs, what shall poor men do? For me, I am here a Windsor stag; and the fattest, I think, i' th' forest: Send me a cool rut-time, Jove, or who can blame me to piss my tallow? Who comes here? my doe?

*Enter Mrs. FORD and Mrs. PAGE.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Sir John? art thou there, my deer? my male deer?

*Fal.* My doe with the black scut?—Let the sky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of *Green Sleeves*; hail kissing-comfits, and snow eringoes; let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here. *[Embracing her.]*

*Mrs. Ford.* Mistress Page is come with me, sweetheart.

*Fal.* Divide me like a bribe-buck, each a haunch: I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman? ha! Speak I like Herne the hunter?—Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome! *[Noise within.]*

*Mrs. Page.* Alas! what noise?

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven forgive our sins!

*Fal.* What should this be?

*Mrs. Ford.* } Away, away. *[They run off.]*  
*Mrs. Page.* }

*Fal.* I think, the devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire; he would never else cross me thus.



*Enter Sir HUGH EVANS, like a satyr; Mrs. QUICKLY, and PISTOL; ANNE PAGE, as the Fairy Queen, attended by her brother and others, dressed like fairies, with waxen tapers on their heads.*

*Quick.* Fairies, black, grey, green, and white,  
You moon-shine revellers, and shades of night,  
You orphan-heirs of fixed destiny,  
Attend your office, and your quality.—  
*Crier Hobgoblin,* make the fairy o-yes.

*Pist.* Elves, list your names; silence, you airy toys.  
*Cricket,* to Windsor chimnies shalt thou leap:  
Where fires thou find'st unrak'd, and hearths unswept,  
There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry:  
Our radiant queen hates sluts, and sluttery.

*Ful.* They are fairies; he, that speaks to them, shall  
die:  
I'll wink and couch: No man their works must eye.  
[*Lies down upon his face.*]

*Eva.* Where's *Pede*?—Go you, and where you find a  
maid,  
That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said,  
Raise up the organs of her fantasy,  
Sleep she as sound as careless infancy;  
But those as sleep, and think not on their sins,  
Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and  
shins.

*Quick.* About, about;  
Search Windsor castle, elves, within and out:  
Strew good luck, oushes, on every sacred room;  
That it may stand till the perpetual doom,  
In state as wholesome, as in state 'tis fit;  
Worthy the owner, and the owner it.



The several chairs of order look you scour  
With juice of balm, and every precious flower :  
Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,  
With loyal blazon, evermore be blest !  
And nightly, meadow-fairies, look, you sing,  
Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring :  
Th' expressure that it bears, green let it be,  
More fertile-fresh than all the field to see ;  
And, *Hony soit qui mal y pense*, write,  
In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white ;  
Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,  
Buckled below fair knight-hood's bending knee :  
Fairies use flowers for their charactery. }  
Away ; disperse : But, till 'tis one o'clock,  
Our dance of custom, round about the oak  
Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

*Eva.* Pray you, lock hand in hand ; yourselves in  
order set :

And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,  
To guide our measure round about the tree.  
But, stay ; I smell a man of middle earth.

*Fal.* Heavens defend me from that Welch fairy ! lest  
he transform me to a piece of cheese !

*Pist.* Vile worm, thou wast o'er-look'd even in thy  
birth.

*Quick.* With trial-fire touch me his finger-end :  
If he be chaste, the flame will back descend,  
And turn him to no pain ; but if he start,  
It is the flesh of a corrupted heart.

*Pist.* A trial, come.

*Eva.* Come, will this wood take fire ?

[*They burn him with their tapers*

*Fal.* Oh, oh, oh !



*Quick.* Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire !  
About him, fairies ; sing a scornful rhyme :  
And, as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

*Eva.* It is right ; indeed he is full of lecheries and iniquity.

## SONG.

*Fye on sinful fantasy !  
Fye on lust and luxury !  
Lust is but a bloody fire,  
Kindled with unchaste desire,  
Fed in heart ; whose flames aspire,  
As thoughts do blow them, higher and higher.  
Pinch him, fairies, mutually ;  
Pinch him for his villainy ;  
Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,  
Till candles, and star-light, and moonshine be out.*

*During this song, the fairies pinch Falstaff. Doctor Caius comes one way, and steals away a fairy in green ; Slender another way, and takes off a fairy in white ; and Fenton comes, and steals away Mrs. Anne Page. A noise of hunting is made within. All the fairies run away. Falstaff pulls off his buck's head, and rises.*

*Enter PAGE, FORD, Mrs. PAGE, and Mrs. FORD. They lay hold on him.*

*Page.* Nay, do not fly : I think, we have watch'd you now ;

Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn ?

*Mrs. Page.* I pray you, come ; hold up the jest no higher :—

Now, good sir John, how like you Windsor wives ?

See you these, husband ? do not these fair yokes

Become the forest better than the town ?



*Ford.* Now, sir, who's a cuckold now?—Master Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; here are his horns, master Brook: And, master Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds of money; which must be paid to master Brook; his horses are arrested for it, master Brook.

*Mrs. Ford.* Sir John, we have had ill luck; we could never meet. I will never take you for my love again, but I will always count you my deer.

*Fal.* I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass.

*Ford.* Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

*Fal.* And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought, they were not fairies: and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprize of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were fairies. See now, how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

*Eva.* Sir John Falstaff, serve Got, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

*Ford.* Well said, fairy Hugh.

*Eva.* And leave you your jealousies too, I pray you.

*Ford.* I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English.

*Fal.* Have I laid my brain in the sun, and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welch goat too? Shall I have a coxcomb of frize? 'tis time I were choked with a piece of toasted cheese.

*Eva.* Seese is not good to give putter; your pelly is all putter.

*Fal.* Seese and putter! have I lived to stand at the



taunt of one that makes fritters of English? This is enough to be the decay of lust and late-walking, through the realm.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, and have given ourselves without scruple to hell, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

*Ford.* What, a hodge-pudding? a bag of flax?

*Mrs. Page.* A puffed man?

*Page.* Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails?

*Ford.* And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

*Page.* And as poor as Job?

*Ford.* And as wicked as his wife?

*Eva.* And given to fornications, and to taverns, and sack, and wine, and metheglins, and to drinkings, and swearings, and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

*Fal.* Well, I am your theme: you have the start of me; I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welch flannel: ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me: use me as you will.

*Ford.* Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pander: over and above that you have suffered, I think, to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, husband, let that go to make amends:

Forgive that sum, and so we'll all be friends.

*Ford.* Well, here's my hand; all's forgiven at last.

*Page.* Yet be cheerful, knight: thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee



to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee: Tell her, master Slender hath married her daughter.

*Mrs. Page.* Doctors doubt that: If Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this, doctor Caius' wife. [*Aside.*]

*Enter SLENDER.*

*Slen.* Whoo, ho! ho! father Page!

*Page.* Son! how now? how now, son? have you despatched?

*Slen.* Despatched!—I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't; would I were hanged, la, else.

*Page.* Of what, son?

*Slen.* I came yonder at Eton to marry mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy: If it had not been i' th' church, I would have swunged him, or he should have swunged me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir, and tis a post-master's boy.

*Page.* Upon my life then you took the wrong.

*Slen.* What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl: If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

*Page.* Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you, how you should know my daughter by her garments?

*Slen.* I went to her in white, and cry'd, *mum*, and she cryed *budget*, as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a post-master's boy.

*Eva.* Jeshu! Master Slender, cannot you see but marry boys?

*Page.* O, I am vexed at heart: What shall I do?

*Mrs. Page.* Good George, be not angry: I knew of



your purpose ; turned my daughter into green ; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

*Enter CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vere is mistress Page ? By gar, I am cozened ; I ha' married *un garçon*, a boy ; *un païsan*, by gar, a boy ; it is not Anne Page : by gar, I am cozened.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, did you take her in green ?

*Caius.* Ay, be gar, and 'tis a boy : be gar, I'll raise all Windsor. *[Exit CAIUS.]*

*Ford.* This is strange : Who hath got the right Anne ?

*Page.* My heart misgives me : Here comes master Fenton.

*Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE.*

How now, master Fenton ?

*Anne.* Pardon, good father ! good my mother, pardon !

*Page.* Now, mistress ? how chance you went not with master Slender ?

*Mrs. Page.* Why went you not with master doctor, maid ?

*Fent.* You do amaze her : Hear the truth of it. You would have married her most shamefully, Where there was no proportion held in love. The truth is, She and I, long since contracted, Are now so sure, that nothing can dissolve us. The offence is holy, that she hath committed : And this deceit loses the name of craft, Of disobedience, or unduteous title ; Since therein she doth evitate and shun



A thousand irreligious cursed hours,  
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her

*Ford.* Stand not amaz'd : here is no remedy :—  
In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state ;  
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.

*Fal.* I am glad, though you have ta'en a special  
stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced.

*Page.* Well, what remedy ? Fenton, heaven give  
thee joy !

What cannot be eschew'd, must be embrac'd.

*Fal.* When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are  
chas'd.

*Eva.* I will dance and eat plums at your wedding.

*Mrs. Page.* Well, I will muse no further :—Master  
Fenton,

Heaven give you many, many merry days !—  
Good husband, let us every one go home,  
And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire ;  
Sir John and all.

*Ford.* Let it be so :—Sir John,  
To master Brook you yet shall hold your word ;  
For he, to-night, shall lie with mistress Ford.

[*Exeunt.*



A thousand irreligious cursed hours,  
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her  
Love stand not amazed: there is no remedy:—  
In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state;  
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.  
For I am glad, though you have taken a special  
stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced.  
Pace, Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give  
this joy!  
What cannot be achieved, must be endured.  
Yet when night-dogs run, all sorts of deep are  
closed.  
For I will dance and eat plums at your wedding.  
Pace, Well, I will leave no further—  
Fenton,  
Heaven give you many merry days!—  
Good husband, let us every one go home,  
And leave this point over to a country fire;  
Sir John and all.  
Fond, let it be so:—Sir John,  
To master Brook you yet shall hold your word;  
For he to night shall be with mistress Ford.  
[Exit Fenton]  
Alas, that I should have loved so true a man,  
And yet have loved him so untrue a man!  
What is that I have done? I have done  
nothing but what I have done.  
Are you not gone? I have done  
nothing but what I have done.  
And this is all that I have done.  
Of this I have done nothing but  
what I have done.



# TWELFTH-NIGHT:

OR,

## WHAT YOU WILL.



TWELFTH-NIGHT:

OR

WHAT YOU WILL.



**TWELFTH-NIGHT.]** There is great reason to believe, that the serious part of this Comedy is founded on some old translation of the seventh history in the fourth volume of Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*. Belleforest took the story, as usual, from Bandello. The comic scenes appear to have been entirely the production of Shakespeare. It is not impossible, however, that the circumstances of the Duke sending his Page to plead his cause with the Lady, and of the Lady's falling in love with the Page, &c. might be borrowed from the Fifth Eglog of Barnaby Googe, published with his other original Poems in 1563 :

" A worthy *Knyght* dyd love her longe,  
 " And for her sake dyd feale  
 " The panges of love, that happen styl  
 " By frowning fortune's wheale.  
 " He had a *Page*, *Valerius* named,  
 " Whom so much he dyd truste,  
 " That all the secrets of his hart  
 " To hym declare he muste.  
 " And made hym all the onely meanes  
 " To sue for his redresse,  
 " And to entreate for grace to her  
 " That caused his distresse.  
 " She whan as first she saw his page  
 " Was straight with hym in love,  
 " That nothyng coude *Valerius* face  
 " From *Claudia's* mynde remove.  
 " By hym was *Faustus* often harde,  
 " By hym his sutes toke place,  
 " By hym he often dyd aspyre  
 " To se his Ladyes face.  
 " This passed well, tyll at the length  
 " *Valerius* sore did sewe,  
 " With many teares besechyng her  
 " His mayster's gryefe to rewe.  
 " And tolde her that yf she wolde not  
 " Release his mayster's payne,  
 " He never wolde attempte her more  
 " Nor se her ones agayne," &c.

Thus also concludes the first scene of the third act of the play before us :

" And so adieu, good madam ; never more  
 " Will I my master's tears to you deplore," &c.

I offer no apology for the length of the foregoing extract, the book from which it is taken, being so uncommon, that only one copy, except that in my own possession, has hitherto occurred. Even Dr. Farmer, the late Rev. T. Warton, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Malone, were unacquainted with this Collection of Googe's Poetry.

August 6, 1607, a Comedy called *What you will*, (which is the second title of this play,) was entered at Stationers'



Hall by Tho. Thorpe. I believe, however, it was Marston's play with that name. Ben Jonson, who takes every opportunity to find fault with Shakespeare, seems to ridicule the conduct of *Twelfth Night* in his *Every Man out of his Humour*, at the end of Act III. sc. vi. where he makes *Mitis* say, "That the argument of his comedy might have been of some other nature, as of a duke to be in love with a countess, and that countess to be in love with the duke's son, and the son in love with the lady's waiting maid: *some such cross wooing, with a clown to their serving man, better than be thus near and familiarly allied to the time.*"

STEEVENS.

I suppose this comedy to have been written in 1614. If however the foregoing passage was levelled at *Twelfth Night*, my speculation falls to the ground. See *An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakespeare's Plays*, Vol. II.

MALONE.

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### PERSONS REPRESENTED.

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ORSINO, *duke of Illyria.*

SEBASTIAN, *a young gentleman, brother to Viola.*

ANTONIO, *a sea captain, friend to Sebastian.*

*A sea captain, friend to Viola.*

VALENTINE, } *gentlemen attending on the duke.*

CURIO, }

Sir TOBY BELCH, *uncle of Olivia.*

Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK.

MALVOLIO, *steward to Olivia.*

FABIAN, }

Clown, } *servants to Olivia.*

OLIVIA, *a rich countess.*

VIOLA, *in love with the duke.*

MARIA, *Olivia's woman.*

*Lords, Priests, Sailors, Officers, Musicians, and other Attendants.*

SCENE, *a city in Illyria; and the sea-coast near it.*



# TWELFTH-NIGHT:

OR,

WHAT YOU WILL.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in the Duke's palace.*

*Enter DUKE, CURIO, Lords; Musicians attending*

*Duke.* If musick be the food of love, play on,  
Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,  
The appetite may sicken, and so die.—  
That strain again;—it had a dying fall:  
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,  
That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
Stealing, and giving odour.—Enough; no more;  
'Tis not so sweet now, as it was before.  
O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou!  
That, notwithstanding thy capacity  
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,  
Of what validity and pitch soever,  
But falls into abatement and low price,  
Even in a minute! so full of shapes is fancy,  
That it alone is high-fantastical.



*Cur.* Will you go hunt, my lord?

*Duke.*

What, Curio?

*Cur.*

The hart

*Duke.* Why, so I do, the noblest that I have:  
O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,  
Methought, she purg'd the air of pestilence;  
That instant was I turn'd into a hart;  
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,  
E'er since pursue me.—How now? what news from her?

*Enter VALENTINE.*

*Val.* So please my lord, I might not be admitted,  
But from her handmaid do return this answer:  
The element itself, till seven years heat,  
Shall not behold her face at ample view;  
But, like a cloistress, she will veiled walk,  
And water once a day her chamber round  
With eye-offending brine: all this, to season  
A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh,  
And lasting, in her sad remembrance.

*Duke.* O, she, that hath a heart of that fine frame,  
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,  
How will she love, when the rich golden shaft,  
Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else  
That live in her! when liver, brain, and heart,  
These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and fill'd,  
(Her sweet perfections,) with one self king!—  
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;  
Love-thoughts lie rich, when canopied with bowers.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The sea-coast.*

*Enter VIOLA, Captain, and Sailors.*

*Vio.* What country, friends, is this?



*Cap.* Illyria, lady.

*Vio.* And what should I do in Illyria?  
My brother he is in Elysium.  
Perchance, he is not drown'd:—What think you,  
sailors?

*Cap.* It is perchance, that you yourself were saved.

*Vio.* O my poor brother! and so, perchance, may  
he be.

*Cap.* True, madam: and, to comfort you with chance,  
Assure yourself, after our ship did split,  
When you, and that poor number saved with you,  
Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,  
Most provident in peril, bind himself  
(Courage and hope both teaching him the practice)  
'To a strong mast, that liv'd upon the sea;  
Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,  
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves,  
So long as I could see.

*Vio.* For saying so, there's gold:  
Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,  
Whereto thy speech serves for authority,  
The like of him. Know'st thou this country?

*Cap.* Ay, madam, well; for I was bred and born,  
Not three hours' travel from this very place.

*Vio.* Who governs here?

*Cap.* A noble duke, in nature,  
As in his name.

*Vio.* What is his name?

*Cap.* Orsino.

*Vio.* Orsino! I have heard my father name him:  
He was a bachelor then.

*Cap.* And so is now,  
Or was so very late: for but a month



Ago I went from hence ; and then 'twas fresh  
In murmur, (as, you know, what great ones do,  
The less will prattle of,) that he did seek  
The love of fair Olivia.

*Vio.*

What's she ?

*Cap.* A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count  
That died some twelvemonth since ; then leaving her  
In the protection of his son, her brother,  
Who shortly also died : for whose dear love,  
They say, she hath abjur'd the company  
And sight of men.

*Vio.*

O, that I serv'd that lady :  
And might not be delivered to the world,  
Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,  
What my estate is.

*Cap.*

That were hard to compass ;  
Because she will admit no kind of suit,  
No, not the duke's.

*Vio.* There is a fair behaviour in thee, captain ;  
And though that nature with a beauteous wall  
Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee  
I will believe, thou hast a mind that suits  
With this thy fair and outward character.  
I pray thee, and I'll pay thee bounteously,  
Conceal me what I am ; and be my aid  
For such disguise as, haply, shall become  
The form of my intent. I'll serve this duke ;  
Thou shalt present me as an eunuch to him,  
It may be worth thy pains ; for I can sing,  
And speak to him in many sorts of musick,  
That will allow me very worth his service.  
What else may hap, to time I will commit ;  
Only shape thou thy silence to my wit.



*Cap.* Be you his eunuch, and your mute I'll be :  
When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see !

*Vio.* I thank thee: Lead me on. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A room in Olivia's house.*

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH and MARIA.*

*Sir To.* What a plague means my niece, to take the death of her brother thus ? I am sure, care's an enemy to life.

*Mar.* By my troth, sir Toby, you must come in earlier o' nights ; your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours.

*Sir To.* Why, let her except before excepted.

*Mar.* Ay, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of order.

*Sir To.* Confine ? I'll confine myself no finer than I am : these clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots too ; an they be not, let them hang themselves in their own straps.

*Mar.* That quaffing and drinking will undo you : I heard my lady talk of it yesterday ; and of a foolish knight, that you brought in one night here, to be her wooer.

*Sir To.* Who ? Sir Andrew Ague-cheek ?

*Mar.* Ay, he.

*Sir To.* He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria.

*Mar.* What's that to the purpose ?

*Sir To.* Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

*Mar.* Ay, but he'll have but a year in all these ducats ; he's a very fool, and a prodigal.

*Sir To.* Fye, that you'll say so ! he plays o' the viol-de-gambo, and speaks three or four languages word



for word, without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

*Mar.* He hath, indeed,—almost natural: for, besides that he's a fool, he's a great quarreller; and, but that he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust he hath in quarrelling, 'tis thought among the prudent, he would quickly have the gift of a grave.

*Sir To.* By this hand, they are scoundrels, and substractors, that say so of him. Who are they?

*Mar.* They that add moreover, he's drunk nightly in your company.

*Sir To.* With drinking healths to my niece; I'll drink to her, as long as there is a passage in my throat, and drink in Illyria: He's a coward, and a coystril, that will not drink to my niece, till his brains turn out o' th' toe like a parish-top. What, wench? Castiliano vulgo; for here comes sir Andrew Ague-face.

*Enter Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK.*

*Sir And.* Sir Toby Belch! how now, sir Toby Belch?

*Sir To.* Sweet sir Andrew!

*Sir And.* Bless you, fair shrew.

*Mar.* And you too, sir.

*Sir To.* Accost, sir Andrew, accost.

*Sir And.* What's that?

*Sir To.* My niece's chamber-maid.

*Sir And.* Good mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

*Mar.* My name is Mary, sir.

*Sir And.* Good mistress Mary Accost,—

*Sir To.* You mistake, knight: accost, is, front her board her, woo her, assail her.



*Sir And.* By my troth, I would not undertake her in this company. Is that the meaning of accost?

*Mar.* Fare you well, gentlemen.

*Sir To.* An thou let part so, sir Andrew, 'would thou might'st never draw sword again.

*Sir And.* An you part so, mistress, I would I might never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you have fools in hand?

*Mar.* Sir, I have not you by the hand.

*Sir And.* Marry, but you shall have; and here's my hand.

*Mar.* Now, sir, thought is free: I pray you, bring your hand to the buttery-bar, and let it drink.

*Sir And.* Wherefore, sweet heart? what's your metaphor?

*Mar.* It's dry, sir.

*Sir And.* Why, I think so; I am not such an ass, but I can keep my hand dry. But what's your jest?

*Mar.* A dry jest, sir.

*Sir And.* Are you full of them?

*Mar.* Ay, sir; I have them at my fingers' ends: marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren.

[*Exit MARIA.*

*Sir To.* O knight, thou lack'st a cup of canary: When did I see thee so put down?

*Sir And.* Never in your life, I think; unless you see canary put me down: Methinks, sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian, or an ordinary man has: but I am a great eater of beef, and, I believe, that does harm to my wit.

*Sir To.* No question.

*Sir And.* An I thought that, I'd forswear it. I'll ride home to-morrow, sir Toby.



*Sir To.* *Pourquoy*, my dear knight ?

*Sir And.* What is *pourquoy* ? do or not do ? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues, that I have in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting : O, had I but followed the arts !

*Sir To.* Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair.

*Sir And.* Why, would that have mended my hair ?

*Sir To.* Past question ; for thou seest, it will not curl by nature.

*Sir And.* But it becomes me well enough, does't not ?

*Sir To.* Excellent ; it hangs like flax on a distaff ; and I hope to see a housewife take thee between her legs, and spin it off.

*Sir And.* 'Faith, I'll home to-morrow, sir Toby : your niece will not be seen ; or, if she be, it's four to one she'll none of me : the count himse.f, here, hard by, wooes her.

*Sir To.* She'll none o' th' count ; she'll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit ; I have heard her swear it. Tut, there's life in't, man.

*Sir And.* I'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o' th' strangest mind i' th' world ; I delight in masques and revels sometimes altogether.

*Sir To.* Art thou good at these kickshaws, knight ?

*Sir And.* As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters ; and yet I will not compare with an old man.

*Sir To.* What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight ?

*Sir And.* 'Faith, I can cut a caper.

*Sir To.* And I can cut the mutton to't.

*Sir And.* And, I think, I have the back-trick, simply as strong as any man in Illyria.



*Sir To.* Wherefore are these things hid? wherefore have these gifts a curtain before them? are they like to take dust, like mistress Mall's picture? Why dost thou not go to church in a galliard, and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig; I would not so much as make water, but in a sink-a-pace. What dost thou mean? is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard.

*Sir And.* Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent well in a flame-coloured stock. Shall we set about some revels?

*Sir To.* What shall we do else? were we not born under Taurus?

*Sir And.* Taurus? that's sides and heart.

*Sir To.* No, sir; it is legs and thighs. Let me see thee caper: ha! higher: ha, ha!—excellent! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A room in the Duke's palace.*

*Enter VALENTINE and VIOLA in man's attire.*

*Val.* If the duke continue these favours towards you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced; he hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

*Vio.* You either fear his humour, or my negligence, that you call in question the continuance of his love: Is he inconstant, sir, in his favours?

*Val.* No, believe me.

*Enter DUKE, CURIO, and Attendants.*

*Vio.* I thank you. Here comes the count.

*Duke.* Who saw Cesario, ho?



*Vio.* On your attendance, my lord; here.

*Duke.* Stand you awhile aloof.—Cesario,  
Thou know'st no less but all; I have unclasp'd  
To thee the book even of my secret soul:  
Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her;  
Be not deny'd access, stand at her doors,  
And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow,  
Till thou have audience.

*Vio.* Sure, my noble lord,  
If she be so abandon'd to her sorrow  
As it is spoke, she never will admit me.

*Duke.* Be clamorous, and leap all civil bounds,  
Rather than make unprofited return.

*Vio.* Say, I do speak with her, my lord; What then?

*Duke.* O, then unfold the passion of my love,  
Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith:  
It shall become thee well to act my woes;  
She will attend it better in thy youth,  
Than in a nuncio of more grave aspect.

*Vio.* I think not so, my lord.

*Duke.* Dear lad, believe it;  
For they shall yet belie thy happy years,  
That say, thou art a man: Diana's lip  
Is not more smooth, and rubious; thy small pipe  
Is as the maiden's organ, shrill, and sound,  
And all is semblative a woman's part.  
I know, thy constellation is right apt  
For this affair:—Some four, or five, attend him;  
All, if you will; for I myself am best,  
When least in company:—Prosper well in this,  
And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord,  
To call his fortunes thine.

*Vio.* I'll do my best,



To woo your lady : yet, [*Aside.*] a barful strife !  
Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A room in Olivia's house.*

*Enter MARIA and Clown.*

*Mar.* Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or I will not open my lips, so wide as a bristle may enter, in way of thy excuse : my lady will hang thee thy absence.

*Clo.* Let her hang me : he, that is well hanged in this world, needs to fear no colours.

*Mar.* Make that good.

*Clo.* He shall see none to fear.

*Mar.* A good lenten answer : I can tell thee where that saying was born, of, I fear no colours.

*Clo.* Where, good mistress Mary ?

*Mar.* In the wars ; and that may you be bold to say in your foolery.

*Clo.* Well, God give them wisdom, that have it ; and those that are fools, let them use their talents.

*Mar.* Yet you will be hanged, for being so long absent : or, to be turned away ; is not that as good as a hanging to you ?

*Clo.* Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage ; and, for turning away, let summer bear it out.

*Mar.* You are resolute then ?

*Clo.* Not so neither ; but I am resolved on two points.

*Mar.* That, if one break, the other will hold ; or, if both break, your gaskins fall.



*Clo.* Apt, in good faith ; very apt ! Well, go thy way ; if sir Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria.

*Mar.* Peace, you rogue, no more o' that ; here comes my lady : make your excuse wisely, you were best.

[*Exit.*

*Enter OLIVIA and MALVOLIO.*

*Clo.* Wit, and't be thy will, put me into good fooling ! Those wits, that think they have thee, do very oft prove fools ; and I, that am sure I lack thee, may pass for a wise man : For what says Quinapalus ? Better a witty fool, than a foolish wit.—God bless thee, lady !

*Oli.* Take the fool away.

*Clo.* Do you not hear, fellows ? Take away the lady.

*Oli.* Go to, you're a dry fool ; I'll no more of you : besides, you grow dishonest.

*Clo.* Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel will amend : for give the dry fool drink, then is the fool not dry, bid the dishonest man mend himself ; if he mend, he is no longer dishonest ; if he cannot, let the botcher mend him : Any thing, that's mended, is but patched : virtue, that transgresses, is but patched with sin ; and sin, that amends, is but patched with virtue : If that this simple syllogism will serve, so ; if it will not, what remedy ? As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so beauty's a flower :—the lady bade take away the fool ; therefore, I say again, take her away.

*Oli.* Sir, I bade them take away you.

*Clo.* Misprision in the highest degree !—Lady, Cu-



*cullus non facit monachum*; that's as much as to say, I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.

*Oli.* Can you do it?

*Clo.* Dexteriously, good madonna.

*Oli.* Make your proof.

*Clo.* I must catechize you for it, madonna; Good my mouse of virtue, answer me.

*Oli.* Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll 'bide your proof.

*Clo.* Good madonna, why mourn'st thou?

*Oli.* Good fool, for my brother's death.

*Clo.* I think, his soul is in hell, madonna.

*Oli.* I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

*Clo.* The more fool you, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in heaven.—Take away the fool, gentlemen.

*Oli.* What think you of this fool, Malvolio? doth he not mend?

*Mal.* Yes; and shall do, till the pangs of death shake him: Infirmary, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool.

*Clo.* God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! Sir Toby will be sworn, that I am no fox; but he will not pass his word for two-pence that you are no fool.

*Oli.* How say you to that, Malvolio?

*Mal.* I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal; I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool, that has no more brains than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already; unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest, I take these wise men, that crow



so at these set kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies.

*Oli.* O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition, is to take those things for bird-bolts, that you deem cannon-bullets: There is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove.

*Clo.* Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speakest well of fools!

*Re-enter MARIA.*

*Mar.* Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman, much desires to speak with you.

*Oli.* From the count Orsino, is it?

*Mar.* I know not, madam; 'tis a fair young man, and well attended.

*Oli.* Who of my people hold him in delay?

*Mar.* Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.

*Oli.* Fetch him off, I pray you; he speaks nothing but madman: Fye on him! [*Exit MARIA.*] Go you, Malvolio: if it be a suit from the count, I am sick, or not at home; what you will, to dismiss it. [*Exit MALVOLIO.*] Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

*Clo.* Thou hast spoke for us, madonna, as if thy eldest son should be a fool: whose skull Jove cram with brains, for here he comes, one of thy kin, has a most weak *pia mater*.

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH.*

*Oli.* By mine honour, half drunk.—What is he at the gate, cousin?



*Sir To.* A gentleman.

*Oli.* A gentleman? What gentleman?

*Sir To.* 'Tis a gentleman here—A plague o'these pickle-herrings!—How now, sot?

*Clo.* Good sir Toby,——

*Oli.* Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early by this lethargy?

*Sir To.* Lechery! I defy lechery: There's one at the gate.

*Oli.* Ay, marry; what is he?

*Sir To.* Let him be the devil, an he will, I care not: give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one. [*Exit.*

*Oli.* What's a drunken man like, fool?

*Clo.* Like a drown'd man, a fool, and a madman: one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third drowns him.

*Oli.* Go thou and seek the coroner, and let him sit o' my coz; for he's in the third degree of drink, he's drown'd: go, look after him.

*Clo.* He is but mad yet, madonna; and the fool shall look to the madman. [*Exit Clown*

*Re-enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* Madam, yond young fellow swears he will speak with you. I told him you were sick; he takes on him to understand so much, and therefore comes to speak with you: I told him you were asleep; he seems to have a fore-knowledge of that too, and therefore comes to speak with you. What is to be said to him, lady? he's fortified against any denial.

*Oli.* Tell him, he shall not speak with me.

*Mal.* He has been told so; and he says, he'll stand



at your door like a sheriff's post, and be the supporter of a bench, but he'll speak with you.

*Oli.* What kind of man is he?

*Mal.* Why, of man kind.

*Oli.* What manner of man?

*Mal.* Of very ill manner; he'll speak with you, will you, or no.

*Oli.* Of what personage, and years, is he?

*Mal.* Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, or a codling when 'tis almost an apple: 'tis with him e'en standing water, between boy and man. He is very well-favoured, and he speaks very shrewishly; one would think, his mother's milk were scarce out of him.

*Oli.* Let him approach: Call in my gentlewoman.

*Mal.* Gentlewoman, my lady calls. [*Exit.*

*Re-enter MARIA.*

*Oli.* Give me my veil: come, throw it o'er my face; We'll once more hear Orsino's embassy.

*Enter VIOLA.*

*Vio.* The honourable lady of the house, which is she?

*Oli.* Speak to me, I shall answer for her? Your will?

*Vio.* Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty,—I pray you, tell me, if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her: I would be loath to cast away my speech; for, besides that it is excellently well penn'd, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn; I am very comptible, even to the least sinister usage.



*Oli.* Whence came you, sir?

*Vio.* I can say little more than I have studied, and that question's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance, if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.

*Oli.* Are you a comedian?

*Vio.* No, my profound heart: and yet, by the very fangs of malice, I swear, I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house?

*Oli.* If I do not usurp myself, I am.

*Vio.* Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself; for what is yours to bestow, is not yours to reserve. But this is from my commission: I will on with my speech in your praise, and then shew you the heart of my message.

*Oli.* Come to what is important in't: I forgive you the praise.

*Vio.* Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.

*Oli.* It is the more like to be feigned; I pray you, keep it in. I heard, you were saucy at my gates; and allowed your approach, rather to wonder at you than to hear you. If you be not mad, be gone; if you have reason, be brief: 'tis not that time of moon with me, to make one in so skipping a dialogue.

*Mar.* Will you hoist sail, sir? here lies your way.

*Vio.* No, good swabber; I am to hull here a little longer.—Some mollification for your giant, sweet lady

*Oli.* Tell me your mind.

*Vio.* I am a messenger.

*Oli.* Sure, you have some hideous matter to deliver when the courtesy of it is so fearful. Speak your office.

*Vio.* It alone concerns your ear. I bring no over-



ture of war, no taxation of homage; I hold the olive in my hand: my words are as full of peace as matter.

*Oli.* Yet you began rudely. What are you? what would you?

*Vio.* The rudeness, that hath appear'd in me, have I learn'd from my entertainment. What I am, and what I would, are as secret as maidenhead: to your ears, divinity; to any other's, prophanation.

*Oli.* Give us the place alone: we will hear this divinity. [*Exit MARIA.*] Now, sir, what is your text?

*Vio.* Most sweet lady,—

*Oli.* A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said of it. Where lies your text?

*Vio.* In Orsino's bosom.

*Oli.* In his bosom? In what chapter of his bosom?

*Vio.* To answer by the method, in the first of his heart.

*Oli.* O, I have read it; it is heresy. Have you no more to say?

*Vio.* Good madam, let me see your face.

*Oli.* Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? you are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain, and shew you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one as I was this present: Is't not well done? [*Unveiling.*]

*Vio.* Excellently done, if God did all.

*Oli.* 'Tis in grain, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.

*Vio.* 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on: Lady, you are the cruel'st she alive, If you will lead these graces to the grave, And leave the world no copy.



*Oli.* O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted; I will give out divers schedules of my beauty: It shall be inventoried; and every particle, and utensil, labelled to my will: as, item, two lips indifferent red; item, two grey eyes, with lids to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to 'praise me?

*Vio.* I see you what you are: you are too proud; But, if you were the devil, you are fair. My lord and master loves you; O, such love Could be but recompens'd, though you were crown'd The nonpareil of beauty!

*Oli.* How does he love me?

*Vio.* With adorations, with fertile tears, With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

*Oli.* Your lord does know my mind, I cannot love him:

Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble, Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth; In voices well divulg'd, free, learn'd, and valiant, And, in dimension, and the shape of nature, A gracious person: but yet I cannot love him; He might have took his answer long ago.

*Vio.* If I did love you in my master's flame, With such a suffering, such a deadly life, In your denial I would find no sense, I would not understand it.

*Oli.* Why, what would you?

*Vio.* Make me a willow cabin at your gate, And call upon my soul within the house; Write loyal cantons of contemned love, And sing them loud even in the dead of night; Holla your name to the reverberate hills,



And make the babbling gossip of the air  
Cry out, Olivia! O, you should not rest  
Between the elements of air and earth,  
But you should pity me.

*Oli.* You might do much: What is your parentage?

*Vio.* Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:  
I am a gentleman.

*Oli.* Get you to your lord;  
I cannot love him: let him send no more;  
Unless, perchance, you come to me again,  
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well.  
I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.

*Vio.* I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse;  
My master, not myself, lacks recompense.  
Love make his heart of flint, that you shall love;  
And let your fervour, like my master's, be  
Plac'd in contempt! Farewell, fair cruelty. [*Exit*

*Oli.* What is your parentage?  
*Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:*  
*I am a gentleman.*—I'll be sworn thou art;  
Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit,  
Do give thee five-fold blazon:—Not too fast:—soft!  
soft!

Unless the master were the man.—How now?  
Even so quickly may one catch the plague?  
Methinks, I feel this youth's perfections,  
With an invisible and subtle stealth,  
To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.—  
What, ho, Malvolio!—

*Re-enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* Here, madam, at your service.

*Oli.* Run after that same peevish messenger,



The county's man : he left this ring behind him,  
Would I, or not ; tell him, I'll none of it.  
Desire him not to flatter with his lord,  
Nor hold him up with hopes ; I am not for him :  
If that the youth will come this way to-morrow,  
I'll give him reasons for't. Hie thee, Malvolio.

*Mal.* Madam, I will. [Exit.

*Oli.* I do I know not what : and fear to find  
Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.  
Fate, shew thy force : Ourselves we do not owe ;  
What is decreed, must be ; and be this so ! [Exit.

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## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*The sea-coast.*

*Enter ANTONIO and SEBASTIAN.*

*Ant.* Will you stay no longer ? nor will you not,  
that I go with you ?

*Seb.* By your patience, no : my stars shine darkly  
over me ; the malignancy of my fate might, perhaps,  
distemper yours ; therefore I shall crave of you your  
leave, that I may bear my evils alone : It were a bad  
recompense for your love, to lay any of them on you.

*Ant.* Let me yet know of you, whither you are  
bound.

*Seb.* No, 'sooth, sir ; my determinate voyage is mere  
extravagancy. But I perceive in you so excellent a



touch of modesty, that you will not extort from me what I am willing to keep in; therefore it charges me in manners the rather to express myself. You must know of me then, Antonio, my name is Sebastian, which I called Rodorigo; my father was that Sebastian of Messaline, whom I know, you have heard of: he left behind him, myself, and a sister, both born in an hour. If the heavens had been pleased, 'would we had so ended! but, you, sir, altered that; for, some hour before you took me from the breach of the sea, was my sister drowned.

*Ant.* Alas, the day!

*Seb.* A lady, sir, though it was said she much resembled me, was yet of many accounted beautiful: but, though I could not, with such estimable wonder, overfar believe that, yet thus far I will boldly publish her, she bore a mind that envy could not but call fair: she is drowned already, sir, with salt water, though I seem to drown her remembrance again with more.

*Ant.* Pardon me, sir, your bad entertainment.

*Seb.* O, good Antonio, forgive me your trouble.

*Ant.* If you will not murder me for my love, let me be your servant.

*Seb.* If you will not undo what you have done, that is, kill him whom you have recovered, desire it not. Fare ye well at once: my bosom is full of kindness; and I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more, mine eyes will tell tales of me. I am bound to the count Orsino's court: farewell. [Exit

*Ant.* The gentleness of all the gods go with thee!  
I have many enemies in Orsino's court,



Else would I very shortly see thee there :  
But, come what may, I do adore thee so,  
That danger shall seem sport, and I will go [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A street.*

*Enter VIOLA; MALVOLIO following.*

*Mal.* Were not you even now with the countess Olivia?

*Vio.* Even now, sir; on a moderate pace I have since arrived but hither.

*Mal.* She returns this ring to you, sir; you might have saved me my pains, to have taken it away yourself. She adds moreover, that you should put your lord into a desperate assurance she will none of him: And one thing more; that you be never so hardy to come again in his affairs, unless it be to report your lord's taking of this. Receive it so.

*Vio.* She took the ring of me; I'll none of it.

*Mal.* Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her will is, it should be so returned: if it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it. [Exit.]

*Vio.* I left no ring with her: What means this lady?

Fortune forbid, my outside have not charm'd her!  
She made good view of me; indeed, so much,  
That, sure, methought, her eyes had lost her tongue.  
For she did speak in starts distractedly.  
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion  
Invites me in this churlish messenger.  
None of my lord's ring! why, he sent her none.



I am the man ;—If it be so, (as 'tis,)  
 Poor lady, she were better love a dream.  
 Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,  
 Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.  
 How easy is it, for the proper-false  
 In women's waxen hearts to set their forms !  
 Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we ;  
 For, such as we are made of, such we be.  
 How will this fadge ? My master loves her dearly ;  
 And I, poor monster, fond as much on him ;  
 And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me :  
 What will become of this ! As I am a man,  
 My state is desperate for my master's love ;  
 As I am woman, now alas the day !  
 What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe ?  
 O time, thou must untangle this, not I ;  
 It is too hard a knot for me to untie. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A room in Olivia's house.*

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH, and Sir ANDREW AGUECREEK.*

*Sir To.* Approach, sir Andrew : not to be a-bed after midnight, is to be up betimes ; and *diluculo surgere*, thou know'st,—

*Sir And.* Nay, by my troth, I know not : but I know, to be up late, is to be up late.

*Sir To.* A false conclusion ; I hate it as an unfilled can : To be up after midnight, and to go to bed then, is early ; so that, to go to bed after midnight, is to go to bed betimes. Do not our lives consist of the four elements ?



*Sir And.* 'Faith, so they say; but, I think, it rather consists of eating and drinking.

*Sir To.* Thou art a scholar; let us therefore eat and drink.—Marian, I say!——a stoop of wine!

*Enter Clown.*

*Sir And.* Here comes the fool, i'faith.

*Clo.* How now, my hearts? Did you never see the picture of we three?

*Sir To.* Welcome, ass. Now let's have a catch.

*Sir And.* By my troth, the fool has an excellent oreast. I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg; and so sweet a breath to sing, as the fool has. In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Pigrogromitus, of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus; 'twas very good, i'faith. I sent thee sixpence for thy leman; Hadst it?

*Clo.* I did impeticoes thy gratillity; for Malvolio's nose is no whipstock: My lady has a white hand, and the Myrmidons are no bottle-ale houses.

*Sir And.* Excellent! Why, this is the best fooling, when all is done. Now, a song.

*Sir To.* Come on; there is six-pence for you: let's have a song.

*Sir And.* There's a testril of me too: if one knight give a——

*Clo.* Would you have a love-song, or a song of good life?

*Sir To.* A love-song, a love-song.

*Sir And.* Ay, ay; I care not for good life.



## SONG.

CLO. *O mistress mine, where are you roaming?  
O, stay and hear; your true love's coming,  
That can sing both high and low  
Trip no further, pretty sweetening;  
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,  
Every wise man's son doth know.*

Sir And. Excellent good, i'faith!

Sir To. Good, good.

CLO. *What is love? 'tis not hereafter;  
Present mirth hath present laughter,  
What's to come, is still unsure:  
In delay there lies no plenty;  
Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,  
Youth's a stuff will not endure.*

Sir And. A mellifluous voice, as I am true knight.

Sir To. A contagious breath.

Sir And. Very sweet and contagious, i'faith.

Sir To. To hear by the nose, it is dulcet in contagion. But shall we make the welkin dance indeed? Shall we rouse the night-owl in a catch, that will draw three souls out of one weaver? shall we do that?

Sir And. An you love me, let's do't: I am dog at a catch.

CLO. By'r lady, sir, and some dogs will catch well.

Sir And. Most certain: let our catch be, *Thou knave*.

CLO. *Hold thy peace, thou knave*, knight? I shall be constrain'd in't to call thee knave, knight.

Sir And. 'Tis not the first time I have constrain'd one to call me knave. Begin, fool; it begins, *Hold thy peace*.

CLO. I shall never begin, if I hold my peace.

Sir And. Good, i'faith! Come, begin. [*They sing a catch*]



*Enter MARIA.*

*Mar.* What a catterwauling do you keep here! If my lady have not called up her steward, Malvolio, and bid him turn you out of doors, never trust me.

*Sir To.* My lady's a Cataian, we are politicians; Malvolio's a Peg-a-Ramsey, and *Three merry men be we.* Am not I consanguineous? am I not of her blood? Tilly-valley, lady! *There dwelt a man in Babylon,* lady, lady! [*Singing.*

*Clo.* Beshrew me, the knight's in admirable fooling.

*Sir And.* Ay, he does well enough, if he be disposed, and so do I too; he does it with a better grace, but I do it more natural.

*Sir To.* O, the twelfth day of December,— [*Singing.*

*Mar.* For the love o'God, peace.

*Enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* My masters, are you mad? or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do ye make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers' catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time, in you?

*Sir To.* We did keep time, sir, in our catches. Sneck up!

*Mal.* Sir Toby, I must be round with you. My lady bade me tell you, that, though she harbours you as her kinsman, she's nothing allied to your disorders. If you can separate yourself and your misdemeanors, you are welcome to the house; if not, an it would please you to take leave of her, she is very willing to bid you farewell.



*Sir To.* Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone.

*Mar.* Nay, good sir Toby.

*Clo.* His eyes do shew his days are almost done.

*Mal.* Is't even so?

*Sir To.* But I will never die.

*Clo.* Sir Toby, there you lie.

*Mal.* This is much credit to you.

*Sir To.* Shall I bid him go? [Singing.

*Clo.* What an if you do?

*Sir To.* Shall I bid him go, and spare not?

*Clo.* O no, no, no, no, you dare not.

*Sir To.* Out o'time? sir, ye lie.—Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

*Clo.* Yes, by Saint Anne; and ginger shall be hot i'th' mouth too.

*Sir To.* Thou'rt i'th' right.—Go, sir, rub your chain with crums:—A stoop of wine, Maria!

*Mal.* Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favour at any thing more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule; she shall know of it, by this hand. [Exit.

*Mar.* Go shake your ears.

*Sir And.* 'Twere as good a deed as to drink when a man's a hungry, to challenge him to the field; and then to break promise with him, and make a fool of him.

*Sir To.* Do't, knight; I'll write thee a challenge; or I'll deliver thv indignation to him by word of mouth.

*Mar.* Sweet sir Toby, be patient for to-night; since the youth of the count's was to-day with my lady, she



is much out of quiet. For monsieur Malvolio, let me alone with him: if I do not gull him into a nayword, and make him a common recreation, do not think I have wit enough to lie straight in my bed: I know, I can do it.

*Sir To.* Possess us, possess us; tell us something of him.

*Mar.* Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of Puritan.

*Sir And.* O, if I thought that, I'd beat him like a dog.

*Sir To.* What, for being a Puritan? thy exquisite reason, dear knight?

*Sir And.* I have no exquisite reason for't, but I have reason good enough.

*Mar.* The devil a Puritan that he is, or any thing constantly but a time pleaser; an affectioned ass, that cons state without book, and utters it by great swarths: the best persuaded of himself, so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his ground of faith, that all, that look on him, love him; and on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work.

*Sir To.* What wilt thou do?

*Mar.* I will drop in his way some obscure epistles of love; wherein, by the colour of his beard, the shape of his leg, the manner of his gait, the expressure of his eye, forehead, and complexion, he shall find himself most feelingly personated: I can write very like my lady, your niece; on a forgotten matter we can hardly make distinction of our hands.

*Sir To.* Excellent! I smell a device.

*Sir And.* I have't in my nose too.

*Sir To.* He shall think, by the letters that thou wilt



drop, that they come from my niece, and that she is in love with him.

*Mar.* My purpose is, indeed, a horse of that colour.

*Sir And.* And your horse now would make him an ass.

*Mar.* Ass, I doubt not.

*Sir And.* O, 'twill be admirable.

*Mar.* Sport royal, I warrant you: I know, my physick will work with him. I will plant you two, and let the fool make a third, where he shall find the letter; observe his construction of it. For this night, to bed, and dream on the event. Farewell. *[Exit.*

*Sir To.* Good night, Penthesilea.

*Sir And.* Before me, she's a good wench.

*Sir To.* She's a beagle, true-bred, and one that adores me; What o' that?

*Sir And.* I was adored once too.

*Sir To.* Let's to bed, knight.—Thou hadst need send for more money.

*Sir And.* If I cannot recover your niece, I am a foul way out.

*Sir To.* Send for money, knight; if thou hast her not i'th' end, call me Cut.

*Sir And.* If I do not, never trust me, take it how you will.

*Sir To.* Come, come; I'll go burn some sack, 'tis too late to go to bed now: come, knight; come, knight. *[Exeunt.*



SCENE IV.—*A room in the Duke's palace.*

*Enter DUKE, VIOLA, CURIO, and others.*

*Duke.* Give me some musick:—Now, good morrow, friends:—

Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,  
That old and antique song we heard last night;  
Methought, it did relieve my passion much;  
More than light airs and recollected terms,  
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times:—  
Come, but one verse.

*Cur.* He is not here, so please your lordship, that should sing it.

*Duke.* Who was it?

*Cur.* Feste, the jester, my lord; a fool, that the lady Olivia's father took much delight in: he is about the house.

*Duke.* Seek him out, and play the tune the while.

[*Exit CURIO.—Musick.*]

Come hither, boy; If ever thou shalt love,  
In the sweet pangs of it, remember me:  
For, such as I am, all true lovers are;  
Unstaid and skittish in all motions else,  
Save, in the constant image of the creature  
That is belov'd.—How dost thou like this tune?

*Vio.* It gives a very echo to the seat  
Where Love is thron'd.

*Duke.* Thou dost speak masterly:  
My life upon't, young though thou art, thine eye  
Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves;  
Hath it not, boy?

*Vio.* A little, by your favour.



*Duke.* What kind of woman is't?

*Vio.* Of your complexion.

*Duke.* She is not worth thee then. What years, i'faith?

*Vio.* About your years, my lord.

*Duke.* Too old, by heaven; Let still the woman take

An elder than herself; so wears she to him,

So sways she level in her husband's heart.

For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,

Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,

More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,

Than women's are.

*Vio.* I think it well, my lord.

*Duke.* Then let thy love be younger than thyself,  
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent:

For women are as roses; whose fair flower,

Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.

*Vio.* And so they are: alas, that they are so;  
To die, even when they to perfection grow!

*Re-enter CURIO and Clown.*

*Duke.* O fellow, come, the song we had last night:—  
Mark it, Cesario; it is old, and plain:

The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,

And the free maids, that weave their thread with  
bones,

Do use to chaunt it; it is silly sooth,

And dallies with the innocence of love,

Like the old age.

*Clo.* Are you ready, sir?

*Duke.* Ay; pr'ythee, sing.

[*Musick.*]



## SONG.

*Clo. Come away, come away, death,  
 And in sad cypress let me be laid;  
 Fly away, fly away, breath;  
 I am slain by a fair cruel maid.  
 My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,  
 O, prepare it;  
 My part of death no one so true  
 Did share it.*

*Not a flower, not a flower sweet,  
 On my black coffin let there be strown;  
 Not a friend, not a friend greet  
 My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown:  
 A thousand thousand sighs to save,  
 Lay me, O, where  
 Sad true lover ne'er find my grave,  
 To weep there.*

*Duke. There's for thy pains.*

*Clo. No pains, sir; I take pleasure in singing, sir*

*Duke. I'll pay thy pleasure then.*

*Clo. Truly, sir, and pleasure will be paid, one time or another.*

*Duke. Give me now leave to leave thee.*

*Clo. Now, the melancholy god protect thee: and the tailor make thy doublet of changeable taffata, for thy mind is a very opal!—I would have men of such constancy put to sea, that their business might be every thing, and their intent every where; for that's it, that always makes a good voyage of nothing.—Farewell. [Exit Clown.*

*Duke. Let all the rest give place.—*

*[Exeunt CURIO and Attendants.*

*Once more, Cesario  
 Get thee to yon' same sovereign cruelty:*



Tell her, my love, more noble than the world,  
Prizes not quantity of dirty lands;  
The parts that fortune hath bestow'd upon her,  
Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune;  
But 'tis that miracle, and queen of gems,  
That nature pranks her in, attracts my soul.

*Vio.* But, if she cannot love you, sir?

*Duke.* I cannot be so answer'd.

*Vio.* 'Sooth, but you must.

Say, that some lady, as, perhaps, there is,  
Hath for your love as great a pang of heart  
As you have for Olivia: you cannot love her;  
You tell her so; Must she not then be answer'd?

*Duke.* There is no woman's sides,  
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion  
As love doth give my heart: no woman's heart  
So big, to hold so much; they lack retention.  
Alas, their love may be call'd appetite,—  
No motion of the liver, but the palate,—  
That suffer surfeit, cloyment, and revolt;  
But mine is all as hungry as the sea,  
And can digest as much: make no compare  
Between that love a woman can bear me,  
And that I owe Olivia.

*Vio.* Ay, but I know,—

*Duke.* What dost thou know?

*Vio.* Too well what love women to men may owe.  
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.  
My father had a daughter lov'd a man,  
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,  
I should your lordship.

*Duke.* And what's her his ory.

*Vio.* A blank, my lord: She never told her love.



But let concealment, like a worm i'th' bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek : she pin'd in thought ;  
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,  
She sat like patience on a monument,  
Smiling at grief. Was not this love, indeed ?  
We men may say more, swear more : but, indeed,  
Our shows are more than will ; for still we prove  
Much in our vows, but little in our love.

*Duke.* But died thy sister of her love, my boy ?

*Vio.* I am all the daughters of my father's house,  
And all the brothers too ;—and yet I know not :—  
Sir, shall I to this lady ?

*Duke.* Ay, that's the theme.  
To her in haste ; give her this jewel ; say,  
My love can give no place, bide no denay. [*Exeunt*

SCENE V.—*Olivia's garden.*

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH, Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK,  
and FABIAN.*

*Sir To.* Come thy ways, signior Fabian.

*Fab.* Nay, I'll come ; if I lose a scruple of this  
sport, let me be boiled to death with melancholy.

*Sir To.* Would'st thou not be glad to have the nig-  
gardly rascally sheep-biter come by some notable  
shame ?

*Fab.* I would exult, man : you know, he brought  
me out of favour with my lady, about a bear-baiting  
here.

*Sir To.* To anger him, we'll have the bear again ;  
and we will fool him black and blue :—Shall we not,  
sir Andrew ?

*Sir And.* An we do not, it is pity of our lives



*Enter MARIA.*

*Sir To.* Here comes the little villain:—How now, my nettle of India?

*Mar.* Get ye all three into the box-tree: Malvolio's coming down this walk; he has been yonder i'th' sun, practising behaviour to his own shadow, this half hour: observe him, for the love of mockery; for, I know, this letter will make a contemplative ideot of him. Close, in the name of jesting! [*The men hide themselves.*] Lie thou there; [*throws down a letter*] for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling. [*Exit MARIA.*]

*Enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* 'Tis but fortune; all is fortune. Maria once told me, she did affect me: and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more exalted respect, than any one else that follows her. What should I think on't?

*Sir To.* Here's an over-weening rogue!

*Fab.* O, peace! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him; how he jets under his advanced plumes!

*Sir And.* 'Slight, I could so beat the rogue:—

*Sir To.* Peace, I say.

*Mal.* To be count Malvolio;—

*Sir To.* Ah, rogue!

*Sir And.* Pistol him, pistol him.

*Sir To.* Peace, peace!

*Mal.* There is example for't; the lady of the strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe.

*Sir And.* Fie on him, Jezebel!



*Fab.* O, peace! now he's deeply in; look, how imagination blows him.

*Mal.* Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state,—

*Sir To.* O, for a stone-bow, to hit him in the eye!

*Mal.* Calling my officers about me, in my branched velvet gown; having come from a day-bed, where I left Olivia sleeping:

*Sir To.* Fire and brimstone!

*Fab.* O, peace, peace!

*Mal.* And then to have the humour of state: and after a demure travel of regard,—telling them, I know my place, as I would they should do theirs,—to ask for my kinsman Toby:

*Sir To.* Bolts and shackles!

*Fab.* O, peace, peace, peace! now, now.

*Mal.* Seven of my people, with an obedient start, make out for him: I frown the while; and, perchance, wind up my watch, or play with some rich jewel. Toby approaches; court'sies there to me:

*Sir To.* Shall this fellow live?

*Fab.* Though our silence be drawn from us with cars, yet peace.

*Mal.* I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control:

*Sir To.* And does not Toby take you a blow o'th' lips then?

*Mal.* Saying, *Cousin Toby, my fortunes having cast me on your niece, give me this prerogative of speech.*—

*Sir To.* What, what?

*Mal.* You must amend your drunkenness.

*Sir To.* Out, scab!

*Fab.* Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot



Mal. *Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight;*

Sir And. That's me, I warrant you.

Mal. *One Sir Andrew:*

Sir And. I knew, 'twas I; for many do call me fool.

Mal. What employment have we here?

[*Taking up the letter.*]

Fab. Now is the woodcock near the gin.

Sir To. O, peace! and the spirit of humours intimate reading aloud to him!

Mal. By my life, this is my lady's hand: these be her very C's, her U's, and her T's; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.

Sir And. Her C's, her U's, and her T's: Why that?

Mal. [*reads*] *To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes:* her very phrases!—By your leave, wax.—Soft!—and the impressure her Lucrece, with which she uses to seal: 'tis my lady: To whom should this be?

Fab. This wins him, liver and all.

Mal. [*reads*] *Jove knows, I love:*

*But who?*

*Lips do not move,*

*No man must know.*

*No man must know.* — What follows? the numbers altered!—*No man must know:*—If this should be thee, Malvolio?

Sir To. Marry, hang thee, brock!

Mal. *I may command, where I adore:*

*But silence, like a Lucrece knife,*

*With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore;*

*M. O, A, I, doth sway my life.*



*Fab.* A fustian riddle!

*Sir To.* Excellent wench, say I.

*Mal.* M, O, A, I, *doth sway my life.*—Nay, but first, let me see,—let me see,—let me see.

*Fab.* What a dish of poison has she dressed him!

*Sir To.* And with what wing the stannyl checks at it!

*Mal.* *I may command where I adore.* Why, she may command me; I serve her, she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity. There is no obstruction in this;—And the end,—What should that alphabetical position portend? if I could make that resemble something in me,—Softly!—*M, O, A, I.*—

*Sir To.* O, ay! make up that:—he is now at a cold scent.

*Fab.* Sowter will cry upon't, for all this, though it be as rank as a fox.

*Mal.* *M,*—Malvolio;—*M,*—why, that begins my name.

*Fab.* Did not I say, he would work it out? the cur is excellent at faults.

*Mal.* *M,*—But then there is no consonancy in the sequel; that suffers under probation: *A* should follow, but *O* does.

*Fab.* And *O* shall end, I hope.

*Sir To.* Ay, or I'll cudgel him, and make him cry, *O.*

*Mal.* And then *I* comes behind;

*Fab.* Ay, an you had any eye behind you, you might see more detraction at your heels, than fortunes before you.

*Mal.* *M, O, A, I;*—This simulation is not as the former:—and yet, to crush this a little, it would bow to me, for every one of these letters are in my name.



Soft; here follows prose.—*If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I am above thee: but be not afraid of greatness: Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. Thy fates open their hands; let thy blood and spirit embrace them. And, to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, cast thy humble slough, and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants: let thy tongue tang arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity: She thus advises thee, that sighs for thee. Remember who commended thy yellow stockings; and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered: I say, remember. Go to; thou art made, if thou desirest to be so; if not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch fortune's fingers. Farewell. She that would alter services with thee,*

*The fortunate-unhappy.*

Day-light and champion discovers not more: this is open. I will be proud, I will read politick authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance, I will be point-de-vice, the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me; for every reason excites to this, that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered; and in this she manifests herself to my love, and, with a kind of injunction, drives me to these habits of her liking. I thank my stars, I am happy. I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings, and cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on. Jove, and my stars be praised!—Here is yet a postscript. *Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou entertainest my love, let it appear in thy smiling, thy smiles become thee well: therefore in my*



*presence still smile, dear my sweet, I pr'ythee. Jove, I thank thee.—I will smile; I will do every thing that thou wilt have me.* [Exit.

*Fab.* I will not give my part of this sport for a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy.

*Sir To.* I could marry this wench for this device.

*Sir And.* So could I too.

*Sir To.* And ask no other dowry with her, but such another jest.

*Enter MARIA.*

*Sir And.* Nor I neither.

*Fab.* Here comes my noble gull-catcher.

*Sir To.* Wilt thou set thy foot o' my neck?

*Sir And.* Or o' mine either?

*Sir To.* Shall I play my freedom at tray-trip, and become thy bond-slave?

*Sir And.* I'faith, or I either.

*Sir To.* Why, thou hast put him in such a dream, that, when the image of it leaves him, he must run mad.

*Mar.* Nay, but say true; does it work upon him?

*Sir To.* Like aqua-vitæ with a midwife.

*Mar.* If you will then see the fruits of the sport, mark his first approach before my lady: he will come to her in yellow stockings, and 'tis a colour she abhors; and cross-gartered, a fashion she detests; and he will smile upon her, which will now be so unsuitable to her disposition, being addicted to a melancholy as she is, that it cannot but turn him into a notable contempt: if you will see it, follow me.

*Sir To.* To the gates of Tartar, thou most excellent devil of wit!

*Sir And.* I'll make one too.

[Exeunt.



## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Olivia's garden.*

*Enter VIOLA, and Clown with a tabor.*

*Vio.* Save thee, friend, and thy musick: Dost thou live by thy tabor?

*Clo.* No, sir, I live by the church.

*Vio.* Art thou a churchman?

*Clo.* No such matter, sir; I do live by the church: for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church.

*Vio.* So thou may'st say, the king lies by a beggar if a beggar dwell near him: or, the church stands by thy tabor, if thy tabor stand by the church.

*Clo.* You have said, sir.—To see this age!—A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit; How quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!

*Vio.* Nay, that's certain; they, that dally nicely with words, may quickly make them wanton.

*Clo.* I would therefore, my sister had had no name, sir.

*Vio.* Why, man?

*Clo.* Why, sir, her name's a word; and to dally with that word, might make my sister wanton: But, indeed, words are very rascals, since bonds disgraced them.

*Vio.* Thy reason, man?

*Clo.* Troth, sir, I can yield you none without words; and words are grown so false, I am loath to prove reason with them



*Vio.* I warrant, thou art a merry fellow, and carest for nothing.

*Clo.* Not so, sir, I do care for something: but in my conscience, sir, I do not care for you; if that be to care for nothing, sir, I would it would make you invisible.

*Vio.* Art not thou the lady Olivia's fool?

*Clo.* No, indeed, sir; the lady Olivia has no folly: she will keep no fool, sir, till she be married; and fools are as like husbands, as pilchards are to herrings, the husband's the bigger; I am, indeed, not her fool, but her corrupter of words.

*Vio.* I saw thee late at the count Orsino's.

*Clo.* Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb, like the sun; it shines every where. I would be sorry, sir, but the fool should be as oft with your master, as with my mistress: I think, I saw your wisdom there.

*Vio.* Nay, an thou pass upon me, I'll no more with thee. Hold, there's expences for thee.

*Clo.* Now Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a beard!

*Vio.* By my troth, I'll tell thee; I am almost sick for one; though I would not have it grow on my chin. Is thy lady within?

*Clo.* Would not a pair of these have bred, sir?

*Vio.* Yes, being kept together, and put to use.

*Clo.* I would play lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus.

*Vio.* I understand you, sir; 'tis well begg'd.

*Clo.* The matter, I hope, is not great, sir, begging but a beggar; Cressida was a beggar. My lady is within, sir. I will construe to them whence you come; who you are, and what you would, are out of my



welkin : I might say, element ; but the word is over-worn. [Exit.

*Vio.* This fellow's wise enough to play the fool ;  
And, to do that well, craves a kind of wit :  
He must observe their mood on whom he jests,  
The quality of persons, and the time ;  
And, like the haggard, check at every feather  
That comes before his eye. This is a practice,  
As full of labour as a wise man's art :  
For folly, that he wisely shows, is fit ;  
But wise men, folly-fallen, quite taint their wit.

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH and Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK.*

*Sir To.* Save you, gentleman.

*Vio.* And you, sir.

*Sir And.* *Dieu vous garde, monsieur.*

*Vio.* *Et vous aussi ; votre serviteur.*

*Sir And.* I hope, sir, you are ; and I am yours.

*Sir To.* Will you encounter the house ? my niece is desirous you should enter, if your trade be to her.

*Vio.* I am bound to your niece, sir : I mean, she is the list of my voyage.

*Sir To.* Taste your legs, sir, put them to motion.

*Vio.* My legs do better understand me, sir, than I understand what you mean by bidding me taste my legs.

*Sir To.* I mean, to go, sir, to enter.

*Vio.* I will answer you with gait and entrance : But we are prevented.

*Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.*

Most excellent accomplished lady, the heavens rain odours on you !



*Sir And.* That youth's a rare courtier! *Rain odours!* well.

*Vio.* My matter hath no voice, lady, but to your own most pregnant and vouchsafed ear.

*Sir And.* *Odours, pregnant, and vouchsafed:—*I'll get 'em all three ready.

*Oli.* Let the garden door be shut, and leave me to my hearing.

[*Exeunt Sir TOBY, Sir ANDREW, and MARIA.*  
Give me your hand, sir.

*Vio.* My duty, madam, and most humble service.

*Oli.* What is your name?

*Vio.* Cesario is your servant's name, fair princess.

*Oli.* My servant, sir! 'Twas never merry world,  
Since lowly feigning was call'd compliment;  
You are servant to the count Orsino, youth.

*Vio.* And he is yours, and his must needs be yours;  
Your servant's servant is your servant, madam.

*Oli.* For him, I think not on him: for his thoughts,  
'Would they were blanks, rather than fill'd with me!

*Vio.* Madam, I come to whet your gentle thoughts  
On his behalf:—

*Oli.* O, by your leave, I pray you;  
I bade you never speak again of him:  
But, would you undertake another suit,  
I had rather hear you to solicit that,  
Than musick from the spheres.

*Vio.* Dear lady,—

*Oli.* Give me leave, I beseech you: I did send,  
After the last enchantment you did here,  
A ring in chase of you; so did I abuse  
Myself, my servant, and, I fear me, you:  
Under your hard construction must I sit,



To force that on you, in a shameful cunning,  
Which you knew none of yours: What might you  
think?

Have you not set mine honour at the stake,  
And baited it with all th' unmuzzled thoughts  
That tyrannous heart can think? To one of your  
receiving

Enough is shown; a cyprus, not a bosom,  
Hides my poor heart: So let me hear you speak.

*Vio.* I pity you.

*Oli.* That's a degree to love.

*Vio.* No, not a grise; for 'tis a vulgar proof,  
That very oft we pity enemies.

*Oli.* Why, then, methinks, 'tis time to smile again:  
O world, how apt the poor are to be proud!  
If one should be a prey, how much the better  
To fall before the lion, than the wolf? [*Clock strikes*  
The clock upbraids me with the waste of time.—  
Be not afraid, good youth, I will not have you:  
And yet, when wit and youth is come to harvest,  
Your wife is like to reap a proper man:  
There lies your way, due west.

*Vio.* Then westward-hoe:  
Grace, and good disposition 'tend your ladyship!  
You'll nothing, madam, to my lord by me?

*Oli.* Stay:  
I pr'ythee, tell me, what thou think'st of me.

*Vio.* That you do think, you are not what you are

*Oli.* If I think so, I think the same of you.

*Vio.* Then think you right; I am not what I am.

*Oli.* I would, you were as I would have you be!

*Vio.* Would it be better, madam, than I am,  
I wish it might; for now I am your fool.



*Oli.* O, what a deal of scorn looks beautiful  
In the contempt and anger of his lip !  
A murd'rous guilt shows not itself more soon  
Than love that would seem hid : love's night is noon  
Cesario, by the roses of the spring,  
By maidhood, honour, truth, and every thing,  
I love thee so, that, maugre all thy pride,  
Nor wit, nor reason, can my passion hide.  
Do not extort thy reasons from this clause,  
For, that I woo, thou therefore hast no cause :  
But, rather, reason thus with reason fetter :  
Love sought is good, but given unsought, is better.

*Vio.* By innocence I swear, and by my youth,  
I have one heart, one bosom, and one truth,  
And that no woman has ; nor never none  
Shall mistress be of it, save I alone.  
And so adieu, good madam ; never more  
Will I my master's tears to you deplore.

*Oli.* Yet come again : for thou, perhaps, may'st  
move  
That heart, which now abhors, to like his love.  
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A room in Olivia's house.*

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH, Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK, and  
FABIAN.*

*Sir And.* No, faith, I'll not stay a jot longer.

*Sir To.* Thy reason, dear venom, give thy reason.

*Fab.* You must needs yield your reason, sir Andrew.

*Sir And.* Marry, I saw your niece do more favours  
to the count's serving man, than ever she bestowed  
upon me ; I saw't i'th' orchard.



*Sir To.* Did she see thee the while, old boy? tell me that.

*Sir And.* As plain as I see you now

*Fab.* This was a great argument of love in her toward you.

*Sir And.* 'Slight! will you make an ass o' me?

*Fab.* I will prove it legitimate, sir, upon the oaths of judgement and reason.

*Sir To.* And they have been grand jury-men, since before Noah was a sailor.

*Fab.* She did show favour to the youth in your sight, only to exasperate you, to awake your dormouse valour, to put fire in your heart, and brimstone in your liver: You should then have accosted her; and with some excellent jests, fire-new from the mint, you should have banged the youth into dumbness. This was looked for at your hand, and this was baulked: the double guilt of this opportunity you let time wash off, and you are now sailed into the north of my lady's opinion; where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard, unless you do redeem it by some laudable attempt, either of valour, or policy.

*Sir And.* And't be any way, it must be with valour; for policy I hate: I had as lief be a Brownist, as a politician.

*Sir To.* Why then, build me thy fortunes upon the basis of valour. Challenge me the count's youth to fight with him; hurt him in eleven places; my niece shall take note of it: and assure thyself, there is no love-broker in the world can more prevail in man's commendation with woman, than report of valour.

*Fab.* There is no way but this, sir Andrew.

*Sir And.* Will either of you bear me a challenge to him?



*Sir To.* Go, write it in a martial hand; be curst and brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent, and full of invention: taunt him with the licence of ink: if thou *thou'st* him some thrice, it shall not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware in England, set 'em down; go, about it. Let there be gall enough in thy ink; though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter: About it.

*Sir And.* Where shall I find you?

*Sir To.* We'll call thee at the *cubiculo*: Go.

[*Exit Sir ANDREW.*]

*Fab.* This is a dear manakin to you, sir Toby.

*Sir To.* I have been dear to him, lad; some two thousand strong, or so.

*Fab.* We shall have a rare letter from him: but you'll not deliver it.

*Sir To.* Never trust me then; and by all means stir on the youth to an answer. I think, oxen and wainropes cannot hale them together. For Andrew, if he were opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog the foot of a flea, I'll eat the rest of the anatomy.

*Fab.* And his opposite, the youth, bears in his visage no great presage of cruelty.

*Enter MARIA.*

*Sir To.* Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes.

*Mar.* If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourselves into stitches, follow me: yon' gull Malvolio is turned heathen, a very renegado; for there is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly,



can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness. He's in yellow stockings.

*Sir To.* And cross-gartered?

*Mar.* Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps a school i'th' church.—I have dogged him, like his murderer: He does obey every point of the letter that I dropped to betray him. He does smile his face into more lines, than are in the new map, with the augmentation of the Indies: you have not seen such a thing as 'tis; I can hardly forbear hurling things at him. I know, my lady will strike him; if she do he'll smile, and take't for a great favour.

*Sir To.* Come, bring us, bring us where he is.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A street.*

*Enter ANTONIO and SEBASTIAN.*

*Seb.* I would not, by my will, have troubled you; But, since you make your pleasure of your pains, I will no further chide you.

*Ant.* I could not stay behind you; my desire, More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth; And not all love to see you, (though so much, As might have drawn one to a longer voyage,) But jealousy what might befall your travel, Being skilless in these parts; which to a stranger, Unguided, and unfriended, often prove Rough and unhospitable: My willing love, The rather by these arguments of fear, Set forth in your pursuit.

*Seb.* My kind Antonio, I can no other answer make, but, thanks,



And thanks, and ever thanks : Often good turns  
Are shuffled off with such uncurrent pay :  
But, were my worth, as is my conscience, firm,  
You should find better dealing. What's to do ?  
Shall we go see the reliques of this town ?

*Ant.* To-morrow, sir ; best, first, go see your  
lodging.

*Seb.* I am not weary, and 'tis long to night ;  
I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes  
With the memorials, and the things of fame,  
That do renown this city.

*Ant.* 'Would, you'd pardon me ;  
I do not without danger walk these streets :  
Once, in a sea-fight, 'gainst the Count his gallies,  
I did some service ; of such note, indeed,  
That, were I ta'en here, it would scarce be answer'd.

*Seb.* Belike, you slew great number of his people.

*Ant.* Th' offence is not of such a bloody nature ;  
Albeit the quality of the time, and quarrel,  
Might well have given us bloody argument.  
It might have since been answer'd in repaying  
What we took from them ; which, for traffick's sake,  
Most of our city did : only myself stood out :  
For which, if I be lapsed in this place,  
I shall pay dear.

*Seb.* Do not then walk too open.

*Ant.* It doth not fit me. Hold, sir, here's my purse ;  
In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,  
Is best to lodge : I will bespeak our diet,  
Whiles you beguile the time, and feed your knowledge  
With viewing of the town ; there shall you have me.

*Seb.* Why I your purse ?

*Ant.* Haply, your eye shall light upon some toy



You have desire to purchase ; and your store,  
I think, is not for idle markets, sir.

*Seb.* I'll be your purse-bearer, and leave you for  
An hour.

*Ant.* To the Elephant.—

*Seb.* I do remember.

[*Exeun.*]

SCENE IV.—*Olivia's garden.*

*Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.*

*Oli.* I have sent after him : He says, he'll come ;  
How shall I feast him ? what bestow on him ?  
For youth is bought more oft, than begg'd, or borrow'd.  
I speak too loud.—  
Where is Malvolio ?—he is sad, and civil,  
And suits well for a servant with my fortunes ;—  
Where is Malvolio ?

*Mar.* He's coming, madam ;  
But in strange manner. He is sure possess'd.

*Oli.* Why, what's the matter ? does he rave ?

*Mar.* No, madam,  
He does nothing but smile : your ladyship  
Were best have guard about you, if he come ;  
For, sure, the man is tainted in his wits.

*Oli.* Go call him hither.—I'm as mad as he,  
If sad and merry madness equal be.—

*Enter MALVOLIO.*

How now, Malvolio ?

*Mal.* Sweet lady, ho, ho. [*Smiles fantastically.*]

*Oli.* Smil'st thou ?

I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.



*Mal.* Sad, lady? I could be sad: This does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; But what of that, if it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is: *Please one, and please all.*

*Oli.* Why, how dost thou, man? what is the matter with thee?

*Mal.* Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs: It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed. I think, we do know the sweet Roman nand.

*Oli.* Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?

*Mal.* To bed? ay, sweet-heart; and I'll come to thee.

*Oli.* God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so, and kiss thy hand so oft?

*Mar.* How do you, Malvolio?

*Mal.* At your request? Yes; Nightingales answer laws.

*Mar.* Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?

*Mal.* *Be not afraid of greatness*:—'Twas well writ.

*Oli.* What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?

*Mal.* *Some are born great*,—

*Oli.* Ha?

*Mal.* *Some achieve greatness*,—

*Oli.* What say'st thou?

*Mal.* *And some have greatness thrust upon them.*

*Oli.* Heaven restore thee!

*Mal.* *Remember, who commended thy yellow stockings*;—

*Oli.* Thy yellow stockings?

*Mal.* *And wished to see thee cross-gartered.*

*Oli.* Cross-gartered?



Mal. *Go to: thou art made, if thou desirest to be so;—*

Oli. Am I made?

Mal. *If not, let me see thee a servant still.*

Oli. Why, this is very midsummer madness.

*Enter Servant.*

Ser. Madam, the young gentleman of the count Orsino's is returned; I could hardly entreat him back: he attends your ladyship's pleasure.

Oli. I'll come to him. [*Exit Servant.*] Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby? Let some of my people have a special care of him; I would not have him miscarry for the half of my dowry. [*Exeunt OLIVIA and MARIA*

Mal. Oh, ho! do you come near me now? no worse man than sir Toby to look to me? This concurs directly with the letter: she sends him on purpose, that I may appear stubborn to him; for she incites me to that in the letter. *Cast thy humble slough,* says she;—*be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants,—let thy tongue tang with arguments of state,—put thyself into the trick of singularity;—*and, consequently, sets down the manner how; as, a sad face, a reverend carriage, a slow tongue, in the habit of some sir of note, and so forth. I have limed her; but it is Jove's doing, and Jove make me thankful! And, when she went away now, *Let this fellow be looked to:* Fellow! not Malvolio, nor after my degree, but fellow. Why, every thing adheres together; that no dram of a scruple, no scruple of a scruple, no obstacle, no incredulous or unsafe circumstance,—What can be said? Nothing, that can be, can come between me



and the full prospect of my hopes. Well, Jove, not I, is the doer of this, and he is to be thanked.

*Re-enter MARIA, with Sir TOBY BELCH, and FABIAN.*

*Sir To.* Which way is he, in the name of sanctity? If all the devils in hell be drawn in little, and Legion himself possessed him, yet I'll speak to him.

*Fab.* Here he is, here he is:—How is't with you, sir? how is't with you, man?

*Mal.* Go off; I discard you; let me enjoy my private; go off.

*Mar.* Lo, how hollow the fiend speaks within him! did not I tell you?—Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a care of him.

*Mal.* Ah, ha! does she so?

*Sir To.* Go to, go to; peace, peace, we must deal gently with him; let me alone. How do you, Malvolio? how is't with you? What, man! defy the devil: consider, he's an enemy to mankind.

*Mal.* Do you know what you say?

*Mar.* La you, an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart! Pray God, he be not bewitched!

*Fab.* Carry his water to the wise woman.

*Mar.* Marry, and it shall be done to-morrow morning, if I live. My lady would not lose him for more than I'll say.

*Mal.* How now, mistress!

*Mar.* O lord!

*Sir To.* Pr'ythee, hold thy peace; this is not the way: Do you not see, you move him? let me alone with him.

*Fab.* No way but gentleness; gently, gently: the fiend is rough, and will not be roughly used.



*Sir To.* Why, how now, my bawcock? how dost thou, chuck?

*Mal.* Sir?

*Sir To.* Ay, Biddy, come with me. What, man! 'tis not for gravity to play at cherry-pit with Satan: Hang him, foul collier!

*Mar.* Get him to say his prayers; good sir Toby, get him to pray.

*Mal.* My prayers, minx?

*Mar.* No, I warrant you, he will not hear of godliness.

*Mal.* Go, hang yourselves all! you are idle shallow things: I am not of your element; you shall know more hereafter. [Exit.

*Sir To.* Is't possible?

*Fab.* If this were played upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction.

*Sir To.* His very genius hath taken the infection of the device, man.

*Mar.* Nay, pursue him now; lest the device take air, and taint.

*Fab.* Why, we shall make him mad, indeed.

*Mar.* The house will be the quieter.

*Sir To.* Come, we'll have him in a dark room, and bound. My niece is already in the belief that he is mad; we may carry it thus, for our pleasure, and his penance, till our very pastime, tired out of breath, prompt us to have mercy on him: at which time, we will bring the device to the bar, and crown thee for a finder of madmen. But see, but see.

*Enter Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK.*

*Fab.* More matter for a May morning.



*Sir And.* Here's the challenge, read it; I warrant, there's vinegar and pepper in't.

*Fab.* Is't so sawcy?

*Sir And.* Ay, is it, I warrant him: go but read.

*Sir To.* Give me. [*reads.*] Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow.

*Fab.* Good, and valiant.

*Sir To.* Wonder not, nor admire not in thy mind, why I do call thee so, for I will show thee no reason for't.

*Fab.* A good note: that keeps you from the blow of the law.

*Sir To.* Thou comest to the lady Olivia, and in my sight she uses thee kindly: but thou liest in thy throat, that is not the matter I challenge thee for.

*Fab.* Very brief, and exceeding good sense-less.

*Sir To.* I will way-lay thee going home; where if it be thy chance to kill me,——

*Fab.* Good.

*Sir To.* Thou killest me like a rogue and a villain.

*Fab.* Still you keep o'th' windy side of the law: Good.

*Sir To.* Fare thee well; And God have mercy upon one of our souls! He may have mercy upon mine; but my hope is better, and so look to thyself. Thy friend, as thou usest him, and thy sworn enemy. ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK. If this letter move him not, his legs cannot: I'll give't him.

*Mar.* You may have very fit occasion for't; he is now in some commerce with my lady, and will by and by depart.

*Sir To.* Go, sir Andrew; scout me for him at the corner of the orchard, like a bum-bailiff: so soon as ever thou seest him, draw; and, as thou drawest,



swear horrible; for it comes to pass oft, that a terrible oath, with a swaggering accent sharply twanged off, gives manhood more approbation than ever proof itself would have earned him. Away.

*Sir And.* Nay, let me alone for swearing. [Exit.

*Sir To.* Now will not I deliver his letter: for the behaviour of the young gentleman gives him out to be of good capacity and breeding; his employment between his lord and my niece confirms no less: therefore this letter, being so excellently ignorant, will breed no terror in the youth, he will find it comes from a clodpole. But, sir, I will deliver his challenge by word of mouth; set upon Ague-cheek a notable report of valour; and drive the gentleman, (as, I know, his youth will aptly receive it,) into a most hideous opinion of his rage, skill, fury, and impetuosity. This will so fright them both, that they will kill one another by the look, like cockatrices.

*Enter OLIVIA and VIOLA.*

*Fab.* Here he comes with your niece: give them way, till he take leave, and presently after him

*Sir To.* I will meditate the while upon some horrid message for a challenge.

[Exeunt *Sir TOBY, FABIAN, and MARIA.*

*Oli.* I have said too much unto a heart of stone,  
And laid mine honour too unchary out:  
There's something in me, that reproves my fault;  
But such a headstrong potent fault it is,  
That it but mocks reproof.

*Vio.* With the same 'haviour that your passion bears,  
Go on my master's griefs.

*Oli.* Here, wear this jewel for me, 'tis my picture;



Refuse it not, it hath no tongue to vex you :  
And, I beseech you, come again to-morrow.  
What shall you ask of me, that I'll deny ;  
That honour, sav'd, may upon asking give ?

*Vio.* Nothing but this, your true love for my master.

*Oli.* How with mine honour may I give him that  
Which I have given to you ?

*Vio.* I will acquit you.

*Oli.* Well, come again to-morrow : Fare thee well ;  
A fiend, like thee, might bear my soul to hell. [*Exit.*

*Re-enter Sir TOBY BELCH and FABIAN.*

*Sir To.* Gentleman, God save thee.

*Vio.* And you, sir.

*Sir To.* That defence thou hast, betake thee to't :  
f what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I  
know not : but thy interceptor, full of despight, bloody  
as the hunter, attends thee at the orchard end : dis-  
mount thy tuck, be yare in thy preparation, for thy  
assailant is quick, skilful, and deadly.

*Vio.* You mistake, sir ; I am sure, no man hath any  
quarrel to me ; my remembrance is very free and clear  
from any image of offence done to any man.

*Sir To.* You'll find it otherwise, I assure you : there-  
fore, if you hold your life at any price, betake you to  
your guard ; for your opposite hath in him what  
youth, strength, skill, and wrath, can furnish man  
withal.

*Vio.* I pray you, sir, what is he ?

*Sir To.* He is knight, dubbed with unhacked rapier,  
and on carpet consideration ; but he is a devil in  
private brawl : souls and bodies hath he divorced three ;  
and his incensement at this moment is so implacable,



that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death and sepulchre: hob, nob, is his word; give't, or take't.

*Vio.* I will return again into the house, and desire some conduct of the lady. I am no fighter. I have heard of some kind of men, that put quarrels purposely on others, to taste their valour: belike, this is a man of that quirk.

*Sir To.* Sir, no; his indignation derives itself out of a very competent injury; therefore, get you on, and give him his desire. Back you shall not to the house, unless you undertake that with me, which with as much safety you might answer him: therefore, on, or strip your sword stark naked; for meddle you must, that's certain, or forswear to wear iron about you.

*Vio.* This is as uncivil, as strange. I beseech you, do me this courteous office, as to know of the knight what my offence to him is; it is something of my negligence, nothing of my purpose.

*Sir To.* I will do so. Signior Fabian, stay you by this gentleman till my return. [Exit Sir TOBY.]

*Vio.* Pray you, sir, do you know of this matter?

*Fab.* I know, the knight is incensed against you, even to a mortal arbitrement; but nothing of the circumstance more.

*Vio.* I beseech you, what manner of man is he?

*Fab.* Nothing of that wonderful promise, to read him by his form, as you are like to find him in the proof of his valour. He is, indeed, sir, the most skilful, bloody, and fatal opposite that you could possibly have found in any part of Illyria: Will you walk towards him? I will make your peace with him, if I can.

*Vio.* I shall be much bound to you for't: I am one



that would rather go with sir priest than sir knight: I care not who knows so much of my mettle. [*Exeunt.*

*Re-enter Sir TOBY with Sir ANDREW.*

*Sir To.* Why, man, he's a very devil; I have not seen such a virago. I had a pass with him, rapier, scabbard, and all, and he gives me the stuck-in, with such a mortal motion, that it is inevitable; and on the answer, he pays you as surely as your feet hit the ground they step on: They say, he has been fencer to the Sophy.

*Sir And.* Pox on't, I'll not meddle with him.

*Sir To.* Ay, but he will not now be pacified: Fabian can scarce hold him yonder.

*Sir And.* Plague on't; an I thought he had been valiant, and so cunning in fence, I'd have seen him damned ere I'd have challenged him. Let him let the matter slip, and I'll give him my horse, grey Capilet.

*Sir To.* I'll make the motion: Stand here, make a good show on't; this shall end without the perdition of souls: Marry, I'll ride your horse as well as I ride you. [*Aside.*

*Re-enter FABIAN and VIOLA.*

I have his horse [*to FAB.*] to take up the quarrel; I have persuaded him, the youth's a devil.

*Fab.* He is as horribly conceited of him; and pants, and looks pale, as if a bear were at his heels.

*Sir To.* There's no remedy, sir; he will fight with you for his oath sake: marry, he hath better bethought him of his quarrel, and he finds that now scarce to be worth talking of: therefore draw, for the supportance of his vow; he protests, he will not hurt you.



*Vio.* Pray God defend me! A little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man. [*Aside.*

*Fab.* Give ground, if you see him furious.

*Sir To.* Come, sir Andrew, there's no remedy; the gentleman will, for his honour's sake, have one bout with you: he cannot by the duello avoid it: but he has promised me, as he is a gentleman and a soldier, he will not hurt you. Come on; to't.

*Sir And.* Pray God, he keep his oath! [*Draws.*

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Vio.* I do assure you, 'tis against my will. [*Draws.*

*Ant.* Put up your sword;—If this young gentleman Have done offence, I take the fault on me; If you offend him, I for him defy you. [*Drawing.*

*Sir To.* You, sir? why, what are you?

*Ant.* One, sir, that for his love dares yet do more Than you have heard him brag to you he will.

*Sir To.* Nay, if you be an undertaker, I am for you. [*Draws.*

*Enter two Officers.*

*Fab.* O good sir Toby, hold; here come the officers.

*Sir To.* I'll be with you anon. [*To ANTONIO.*

*Vio.* Pray, sir, put up your sword, if you please. [*To Sir ANDREW*

*Sir And.* Marry, will I, sir;—and, for that I promised you, I'll be as good as my word: He will hear you easily, and reins well.

1 *Off.* This is the man; do thy office.

2 *Off.* Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit Of count Orsino.

*Ant.* You do mistake me, sir.



1 *Off.* No, sir, no jot ; I know your favour well,  
Though now you have no sea-cap on your head.—  
Take him away ; he knows, I know him well.

*Ant.* I must obey.—This comes with seeking you ;  
But there's no remedy : I shall answer it.  
What will you do ? Now my necessity  
Makes me to ask you for my purse : It grieves me  
Much more, for what I cannot do for you,  
Than what befalls myself. You stand amaz'd ;  
But be of comfort.

2 *Off.* Come, sir, away.

*Ant.* I must entreat of you some of that money.

*Vio.* What money, sir ?—  
For the fair kindness you have show'd me here,  
And, part, being prompted by your present trouble,  
Out of my lean and low ability  
I'll lend you something : my having is not much ;  
I'll make division of my present with you :  
Hold, there is half my coffer.

*Ant.* Will you deny me now ?  
Is't possible, that my deserts to you  
Can lack persuasion ? Do not tempt my misery,  
Lest that it make me so unsound a man,  
As to upbraid you with those kindnesses  
That I have done for you.

*Vio.* I know of none ;  
Nor know I you by voice, or any feature :  
I hate ingratitude more in a man,  
Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,  
Or any taint of vice, whose strong corruption  
Inhabits our frail blood.

*Ant.* O heavens themselves !

2 *Off.* Come, sir I pray you, go.



*Ant.* Let me speak a little. This youth that you see here,  
I snatch'd one half out of the jaws of death;  
Reliev'd him with such sanctity of love,——  
And to his image, which, methought, did promise  
Most venerable worth, did I devotion.

*1 Off.* What's that to us? The time goes by; away

*Ant.* But, O, how vile an idol proves this god!—  
Thou hast, Sebastian, done good feature shame.—  
In nature there's no blemish, but the mind;  
None can be call'd deform'd, but the unkind:  
Virtue is beauty; but the beauteous-evil  
Are empty trunks, o'erflourish'd by the devil.

*1 Off.* The man grows mad; away with him.  
Come, come, sir.

*Ant.* Lead me on. [*Exeunt Officers with ANTONIO.*]

*Vio.* Methinks, his words do from such passion fly  
That he believes himself; so do not I.  
Prove true, imagination, O, prove true,  
That I, dear brother, be now ta'en for you!

*Sir To.* Come hither, knight; come hither, Fabian;  
we'll whisper o'er a couplet or two of most sage saws.

*Vio.* He nam'd Sebastian; I my brother know  
Yet living in my glass; even such, and so,  
In favour was my brother; and he went  
Still in this fashion, colour, ornament,  
For him I imitate: O, if it prove,  
Tempests are kind, and salt waves fresh in love! [*Exit.*]

*Sir To.* A very dishonest pa'try boy, and more a  
coward than a hare: his dishonesty appears, in leaving  
his friend here in necessity, and denying him; and  
for his cowardship, ask Fabian.

*Fab.* A coward, a most devout coward, religious in it.

*Sir And.* 'Slid, I'll after him again, and beat him



*Sir To.* Do, cuff him soundly, but never draw thy sword.

*Sir And.* An I do not,— [Exit.

*Fab.* Come, let's see the event.

*Sir To.* I dare lay any money, 'twill be nothing yet.

[Exeunt.

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## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*The street before Olivia's house.*

*Enter SEBASTIAN and Clown.*

*Clo.* Will you make me believe, that I am not sent for you?

*Seb.* Go to, go to, thou art a foolish fellow;  
Let me be clear of thee.

*Clo.* Well held out, i'faith! No, I do not know you;  
nor I am not sent to you by my lady, to bid you come  
speak with her; nor your name is not master Cesario;  
nor this is not my nose neither.—Nothing, that is so,  
is so.

*Seb.* I pr'ythee, vent thy folly somewhere else;  
Thou know'st not me.

*Clo.* Vent my folly! He has heard that word of some  
great man, and now applies it to a fool. Vent my folly!  
I am afraid this great lubber, the world, will prove a  
cockney.—I pr'ythee now, ungird thy strangeness, and  
tell me what I shall vent to my lady; Shall I vent to  
her, that thou art coming?

*Seb.* I pr'ythee, foolish Greek, depart from me;



There's money for thee ; if you tarry longer,  
I shall give worse payment.

*Clo.* By my troth, thou hast an open hand :—These  
wise men, that give fools money, get themselves a  
good report after fourteen years' purchase.

*Enter Sir ANDREW, Sir TOBY, and FABIAN.*

*Sir And.* Now, sir, have I met you again ? there's  
for you. [*Striking* SEBASTIAN.

*Seb.* Why, there's for thee, and there, and there :  
Are all the people mad ? [*Beating* Sir ANDREW.

*Sir To.* Hold, sir, or I'll throw your dagger o'er  
the house.

*Clo.* This will I tell my lady straight : I would not  
be in some of your coats for two-pence. [*Exit* Clown.

*Sir To.* Come on, sir ; hold. [*Holding* SEBASTIAN

*Sir And.* Nay, let him alone, I'll go another way to  
work with him ; I'll have an action of battery against  
him, if there be any law in Illyria : though I struck  
him first, yet it's no matter for that.

*Seb.* Let go thy hand.

*Sir To.* Come, sir, I will not let you go. 'Come,  
my young soldier, put up your iron : you are well  
fleshed ; come on.

*Seb.* I will be free from thee. What wouldst thou now ?  
If thou dar'st tempt me further, draw thy sword.

[*Draws.*

*Sir To.* What, what ? Nay, then I must have an  
ounce or two of this malapert blood from you. [*Draws.*

*Enter OLIVIA.*

*Oli.* Hold, Toby ; on thy life, I charge thee, hold.

*Sir To.* Madam ?



*Oh.* Will it be ever thus? Ungracious wretch,  
Fit for the mountains, and the barbarous caves,  
Where manners ne'er were preach'd! out of my sight!  
Be not offended, dear Cesario:—  
Rudesby, be gone!—I pr'ythee, gentle friend,

[*Exeunt Sir TOBY, Sir ANDREW, and FABIAN.*]

Let thy fair wisdom, not thy passion, sway  
In this uncivil and unjust extent  
Against thy peace. Go with me to my house;  
And hear thou there how many fruitless pranks  
This ruffian hath botch'd up, that thou thereby  
May'st smile at this: thou shalt not choose but go;  
Do not deny: Beshrew his soul for me,  
He started one poor heart of mine in thee.

*Seb.* What relish is in this? how runs the stream?  
Or I am mad, or else this is a dream:—  
Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep;  
If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep!

*Oli.* Nay, come, I pr'ythee: 'Would thou'dst be  
    rul'd by me!

*Seb.* Madam, I will.

*Oli.* O, say so, and so be! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A room in Olivia's house.*

*Enter MARIA and Clown.*

*Mar.* Nay, I pr'ythee, put on this gown, and this  
beard; make him believe, thou art sir Topas the  
curate; do it quickly: I'll call sir Toby the whilst.  
[*Exit MARIA.*]

*Clo.* Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble myself  
in't; and I would I were the first that ever dissembled  
in such a gown. I am not fat enough to become the



function well; nor lean enough to be thought a good student: but to be said, an honest man, and a good housekeeper, goes as fairly, as to say, a careful man, and a great scholar. — The competitors enter.

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH and MARIA.*

*Sir To.* Jove bless thee, master parson.

*Clo.* *Bonos dies*, sir Toby: for as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of king Gorboduc, *That, that is, is*: so I, being master parson, am master parson; For what is that, but that? and is, but is?

*Sir To.* To him, sir Topas.

*Clo.* What, ho, I say, — Peace in this prison!

*Sir To.* The knave counterfeits well; a good knave.

*Mal.* [*in an inner chamber.*] Who calls there?

*Clo.* Sir Topas, the curate, who comes to visit Malvolio the lunatick.

*Mal.* Sir Topas, sir Topas, good sir Topas, go to my lady.

*Clo.* Out, hyperbolical fiend! how vexest thou this man? talkest thou nothing but of ladies?

*Sir To.* Well said, master parson.

*Mal.* Sir Topas, never was man thus wronged: good sir Topas, do not think I am mad; they have laid me here in hideous darkness.

*Clo.* Fye, thou dishonest Sathan! I call thee by the most modest terms; for I am one of those gentle ones, that will use the devil himself with courtesy: Say'st thou, that house is dark?

*Mal.* As hell, sir Topas.

*Clo.* Why, it hath bay-windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clear stones towards the south-north



are as lustrous as ebony; and yet complainest thou of obstruction?

*Mal.* I am not mad, sir Topas; I say to you, this house is dark.

*Clo.* Madman, thou errest: I say, there is no darkness, but ignorance; in which thou art more puzzled, than the Egyptians in their fog.

*Mal.* I say, this house is as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell; and I say, there was never man thus abused: I am no more mad than you are; make the trial of it in any constant question.

*Clo.* What is the opinion of Pythagoras, concerning wild-fowl?

*Mal.* That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

*Clo.* What thinkest thou of his opinion?

*Mal.* I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion.

*Clo.* Fare thee well: Remain thou still in darkness: thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras, ere I will allow of thy wits; and fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam. Fare thee well.

*Mal.* Sir Topas, sir Topas,—

*Sir To.* My most exquisite sir Topas!

*Clo.* Nay, I am for all waters.

*Mar.* Thou might'st have done this without thy beard, and gown; he sees thee not.

*Sir To.* To him in thine own voice, and bring me word how thou findest him: I would, we were well rid of this knavery. If he may be conveniently delivered, I would he were; for I am now so far in



offence with my niece, that I cannot pursue with any safety this sport to the upshot. Come by and by to my chamber. [*Exeunt Sir TOBY and MARIA.*

*Clo.* Hey Robin, jolly Robin,  
Tell me how thy lady does. [*Singing*

*Mal.* Fool,—

*Clo.* My lady is unkind, perdy.

*Mal.* Fool,—

*Clo.* Alas, why is she so?

*Mal.* Fool, I say;—

*Clo.* She loves another—Who calls, ha?

*Mal.* Good fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink, and paper; as I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to thee for't.

*Clo.* Master Malvolio!

*Mal.* Ay, good fool.

*Clo.* Alas, sir, how fell you besides your five wits?

*Mal.* Fool, there was never man so notoriously abused: I am as well in my wits, fool, as thou art.

*Clo.* But as well? then you are mad, indeed, if you be no better in your wits than a fool.

*Mal.* They have here propertied me; keep me in darkness, send ministers to me, asses, and do all they can to face me out of my wits.

*Clo.* Advise you what you say; the minister is here.—Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens restore! endeavour thyself to sleep, and leave thy vain bibble babble.

*Mal.* Sir Topas,—

*Clo.* Maintain no words with him, good fellow.—Who, I, sir? not I, sir. God b'wi'you, good sir Topas.—Marry, amen.—I will, sir, I will.



*Mal.* Fool, fool, fool, I say,—

*Clo.* Alas, sir, be patient. What say you, sir? I am shent for speaking to you.

*Mal.* Good fool, help me to some light, and some paper; I tell thee, I am as well in my wits, as any man in Illyria.

*Clo.* Well-a-day,—that you were, sir!

*Mal.* By this hand, I am: Good fool, some ink, paper, and light, and convey what I will set down to my lady; it shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of letter did.

*Clo.* I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you not mad indeed? or do you but counterfeit?

*Mal.* Believe me, I am not; I tell thee true.

*Clo.* Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman, till I see his brains. I will fetch you light, and paper, and ink.

*Mal.* Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree: I pr'ythee, be gone.

*Clo.* *I am gone, sir,*

*And anon, sir,*

*I'll be with you again,*

*In a trice,*

*Like to the old vice,*

*Your need to sustain;*

*Who with dagger of lath,*

*In his rage and his wrath,*

*Cries, ah, ha! to the devil:*

*Like a mad lad,*

*Pare thy nails, dad,*

*Adieu, goodman drivell.*

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—*Olivia's garden.*

*Enter SEBASTIAN.*

*Seb.* This is the air; that is the glorious sun;



This pearl she gave me, I do feel t, and see't:  
 And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,  
 Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio then?  
 I could not find him at the Elephant:  
 Yet there he was; and there I found this credit,  
 That he did range the town to seek me out.  
 His counsel now might do me golden service:  
 For though my soul disputes well with my sense,  
 That this may be some error, but no madness,  
 Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune  
 So far exceed all instance, all discourse,  
 That I am ready to distrust mine eyes,  
 And wrangle with my reason, that persuades me  
 To any other trust, but that I am mad,  
 Or else the lady's mad; yet, if 'twere so,  
 She could not sway her house, command her followers,  
 Take, and give back, affairs, and their despatch,  
 With such a smooth, discreet, and stable bearing,  
 As, I perceive, she does: there's something in't,  
 That is deceivable. But here comes the lady.

*Enter OLIVIA and a Priest.*

*Oli.* Blame not this haste of mine: If you mean  
 well,

Now go with me, and with this holy man,  
 Into the chantry by: there, before him,  
 And underneath that consecrated roof,  
 Plight me the full assurance of your faith;  
 That my most jealous and too doubtful soul  
 May live at peace: He shall conceal it,  
 Whiles you are willing it shall come to note;  
 What time we will our celebration keep  
 According to my birth.—What do you say?



*Seb.* I'll follow this good man, and go with you;  
And, having sworn truth, ever will be true.

*Oli.* Then lead the way, good father; — And  
                    heavens so shine,  
That they may fairly note this act of mine! [*Exeunt.*]

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## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The street before Olivia's house.*

*Enter Clown and FABIAN.*

*Fab.* Now, as thou lovest me, let me see his letter.

*Clo.* Good master Fabian, grant me another request.

*Fab.* Any thing.

*Clo.* Do not desire to see this letter.

*Fab.* That is, to give a dog, and, in recompense,  
desire my dog again.

*Enter DUKE, VIOLA, and Attendants.*

*Duke.* Belong you to the lady Olivia, friends?

*Clo.* Ay, sir; we are some of her trappings.

*Duke.* I know thee well; How dost thou, my good  
fellow?

*Clo.* Truly, sir, the better for my foes, and the  
worse for my friends.

*Duke.* Just the contrary; the better for thy friends.

*Clo.* No, sir, the worse.

*Duke.* How can that be?

*Clo.* Marry, sir, they praise me, and make an ass of  
me; now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass: so that



by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself; and by my friends I am aoused: so that, conclusions to be as kisses, if your four negatives make your two affirmatives, why, then the worse for my friends, and the better for my foes.

*Duke.* Why, this is excellent.

*Clo.* By my troth, sir, no; though it please you to be one of my friends.

*Duke.* Thou shalt not be the worse for me; there's gold.

*Clo.* But that it would be double-dealing, sir, I would you could make it another.

*Duke.* O, you give me ill counsel.

*Clo.* Put your grace in your pocket, sir, for this once, and let your flesh and blood obey it.

*Duke.* Well, I will be so much a sinner to be a double dealer; there's another.

*Clo.* *Primo, secundo, tertio*, is a good play; and the old saying is, the third pays for all: the *triplex*, sir, is a good tripping measure; or the bells of St. Bennet, sir, may put you in mind; One, two, three.

*Duke.* You can fool no more money out of me at this throw: if you will let your lady know, I am here to speak with her, and bring her along with you, it may awake my bounty further.

*Clo.* Marry, sir, lullaby to your bounty, till I come again. I go, sir; but I would not have you to think, that my desire of having is the sin of covetousness: but, as you say, sir, let your bounty take a nap, I will awake it anon. [Exit Clown.]

*Enter ANTONIO and Officers.*

*Vio.* Here comes the man, sir, that did rescue me.



*Duke.* That face of his I do remember well;  
Yet, when I saw it last, it was besmear'd  
As black as Vulcan, in the smoke of war:  
A bawbling vessel was he captain of,  
For shallow draught, and bulk, unprizable;  
With which such scathful grapple did he make  
With the most noble bottom of our fleet,  
That very envy, and the tongue of loss,  
Cry'd fame and honour on him.—What's the matter?

*I Off.* Orsino, this is that Antonio,  
That took the Phoenix, and her fraught, from Candy;  
And this is he, that did the Tiger board,  
When your young nephew Titus lost his leg:  
Here in the streets, desperate of shame, and state,  
In private brabble did we apprehend him.

*Vio.* He did me kindness, sir; drew on my side;  
But, in conclusion, put strange speech upon me,  
I know not what 'twas, but distraction.

*Duke.* Notable pirate! thou salt-water thief!  
What foolish boldness brought thee to their mercies,  
Whom thou, in terms so bloody, and so dear,  
Hast made thine enemies?

*Ant.* Orsino, noble sir,  
Be pleas'd that I shake off these names you give me:  
Antonio never yet was thief, or pirate,  
Though, I confess, on base and ground enough,  
Orsino's enemy. A witchcraft drew me hither:  
That most ingrateful boy there, by your side,  
From the rude sea's enrag'd and foamy mouth  
Did I redeem; a wreck past hope he was:  
His life I gave him, and did thereto add  
My love, without retention, or restraint,  
All his in dedication: for his sake,



Did I expose myself, pure for his love,  
Into the danger of this adverse town;  
Drew to defend him, when he was beset.  
Where being apprehended, his false cunning,  
(Not meaning to partake with me in danger,)  
Taught him to face me out of his acquaintance,  
And grew a twenty-years-removed thing,  
While one would wink; denied me mine own purse,  
Which I had recommended to his use  
Not half an hour before.

*Vio.* How can this be?

*Duke.* When came he to this town?

*Ant.* To-day, my lord; and for three months before,  
(No interim, not a minute's vacancy,)  
Both day and night did we keep company.

*Enter OLIVIA and Attendants.*

*Duke.* Here comes the countess; now heaven walks  
on earth.—

But for thee, fellow, fellow, thy words are madness:  
Three months this youth hath tended upon me;  
But more of that anon.—Take him aside.

*Oli.* What would my lord, but that he may not have,  
Wherein Olivia may seem serviceable?—  
Cesario, you do not keep promise with me.

*Vio.* Madam?

*Duke.* Gracious Olivia,—

*Oli.* What do you say, Cesario?—Good my lord,—

*Vio.* My lord would speak, my duty hushes me.

*Oli.* If it be aught to the old tune, my lord,  
It is as fat and fulsome to mine ear,  
As howling after musick.

*Duke.*

Still so cruel



*Oli.* Still so constant, lord.

*Duke.* What! to perverseness? you uncivil lady,  
To whose ingrate and unauspicious altars  
My soul the faithfull'st offerings hath breath'd out,  
That e'er devotion tender'd! What shall I do?

*Oli.* Even what it please my lord, that shall become  
him.

*Duke.* Why should I not, had I the heart to do it,  
Like to the Egyptian thief, at point of death,  
Kill what I love; a savage jealousy,  
That sometime savours nobly?—But hear me this:  
Since you to non-regardance cast my faith,  
And that I partly know the instrument  
That screws me from my true place in your favour,  
Live you, the marble-breasted tyrant, still;  
But this your minion, whom, I know, you love,  
And whom, by heaven I swear, I tender dearly,  
Him will I tear out of that cruel eye,  
Where he sits crowned in his master's spite.—  
Come, boy, with me; my thoughts are ripe in mischief:  
I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,  
To spite a raven's heart within a dove. [Going.

*Vio.* And I, most jocund, apt, and willingly,  
To do you rest, a thousand deaths would die. [Following

*Oli.* Where goes Cesario?

*Vio.* After him I love,  
More than I love these eyes, more than my life,  
More, by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife:  
If I do feign, you witnesses above,  
Punish my life, for tainting of my love!

*Oli.* Ah me, detested! how am I beguil'd!

*Vio.* Who does beguile you? who does do you  
wrong?



*Oli.* Hast thou forgot thyself? Is it so long?—  
Call forth the holy father. [*Exit an Attendant*  
*Duke.* Come away. [*To VIOLA*

*Oli.* Whither my lord?—Cesario, husband, stay.

*Duke.* Husband?

*Oli.* Ay, husband; Can he that deny?

*Duke.* Her husband, sirrah?

*Vio.* No, my lord, not I.

*Oli.* Alas, it is the baseness of thy fear,  
That makes thee strangle thy propriety:  
Fear not, Cesario, take thy fortunes up;  
Be that thou know'st thou art, and then thou art  
As great as that thou fear'st.—O, welcome, father!

*Re-enter Attendant and Priest.*

Father, I charge thee, by thy reverence,  
Here to unfold (though lately we intended  
To keep in darkness, what occasion now  
Reveals before 'tis ripe,) what thou dost know,  
Hath newly past between this youth and me.

*Priest.* A contract of eternal bond of love,  
Confirm'd by mutual joinder of your hands,  
Attested by the holy close of lips,  
Strengthen'd by interchangement of your rings;  
And all the ceremony of this compact  
Seal'd in my function, by my testimony:  
Since when, my watch hath told me, toward my grave,  
I have travelled but two hours.

*Duke.* O, thou dissembling cub! what wilt thou be,  
When time hath sow'd a grizzle on thy case?  
Or will not else thy craft so quickly grow,  
That thine own trip shall be thine overthrow?



Farewell, and take her ; but direct thy feet,  
Where thou and I henceforth may never meet.

*Vio.* My Lord, I do protest,—

*Oli.* O, do not swear;  
Hold little faith, though thou hast too much fear.

*Enter Sir ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK with his head broke.*

*Sir And.* For the love of God, a surgeon ; send one presently to sir Toby.

*Oli.* What's the matter ?

*Sir And.* He has broke my head across, and has given sir Toby a bloody coxcomb too : for the love of God, your help : I had rather than forty pound, I were at home.

*Oli.* Who has done this, sir Andrew ?

*Sir And.* The count's gentleman, one Cesario : we took him for a coward, but he's the very devil incarnate.

*Duke.* My gentleman, Cesario ?

*Sir And.* Od's lifelings, here he is :—You broke my head for nothing ; and that that I did, I was set on to do't by sir Tody.

*Vio.* Why do you speak to me ? I never hurt you : You drew your sword upon me, without cause ; But I bespake you fair, and hurt you not.

*Sir And.* If a bloody coxcomb be a hurt, you have hurt me ; I think, you set nothing by a bloody coxcomb.

*Enter Sir TOBY BELCH, drunk, led by the Clown.*

Here comes sir Toby, halting, you shall hear more : but if he had not been in drink, he would have tickled you othergates than he did.



*Duke.* How now, gentleman? how is't with you?

*Sir To.* That's all one; he has hurt me, and there's the end on't.—Sot, did'st see Dick surgeon, sot?

*Clo.* O he's drunk, sir Toby, an hour ago; his eyes were set at eight i'th' morning.

*Sir To.* Then he's a rogue. After a passy-measure, or a pavin, I hate a drunken rogue.

*Oli.* Away with him: Who hath made this havock with them?

*Sir And.* I'll help you, sir Toby, because we'll be dressed together.

*Sir To.* Will you help an ass-head, and a coxcomb, and a knave? a thin-faced knave, a gull?

*Oli.* Get him to bed, and let his hurt be look'd to.

[*Exeunt* Clown, Sir TOBY, and Sir ANDREW.]

*Enter* SEBASTIAN.

*Seb.* I am sorry, madam, I have hurt your kinsman; But, had it been the brother of my blood, I must have done no less, with wit, and safety. You throw a strange regard upon me, and By that I do perceive it hath offended you; Pardon me, sweet one, even for the vows We made each other but so late ago.

*Duke.* One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons;  
A natural perspective, that is, and is not.

*Seb.* Antonio, O my dear Antonio!  
How have the hours rack'd and tortur'd me,  
Since I have lost thee.

*Ant.* Sebastian are you?

*Seb.* Fear'st thou that, Antonio?

*Ant.* How have you made division of yourself?—



An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin  
Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian?

*Oli.* Most wonderful!

*Seb.* Do I stand there? I never had a brother:  
Nor can there be that deity in my nature,  
Of here and every where. I had a sister,  
Whom the blind waves and surges have devour'd:—  
Of charity, what kin are you to me? [To *Viola*.  
What countryman? what name? what parentage?

*Vio.* Of Messaline: Sebastian was my father;  
Such a Sebastian was my brother too,  
So went he suited to his watery tomb:  
If spirits can assume both form and suit,  
You come to fright us.

*Seb.* A spirit I am, indeed;  
But am in that dimension grossly clad,  
Which from the womb I did participate.  
Were you a woman, as the rest goes even,  
I should my tears let fall upon your cheek,  
And say—Thrice welcome, drowned Viola!

*Vio.* My father had a mole upon his brow.

*Seb.* And so had mine.

*Vio.* And died that day when Viola from her birth  
Had number'd thirteen years.

*Seb.* O, that record is lively in my soul!  
He finished, indeed, his mortal act,  
That day that made my sister thirteen years.

*Vio.* If nothing lets to make us happy both,  
But this my masculine usurp'd attire,  
Do not embrace me, till each circumstance  
Of place, time, fortune, do cohere, and jump,  
That I am Viola: which to confirm,  
I'll bring you to a captain in this town.



Where lie my maiden weeds ; by whose gentle help  
I was preserv'd, to serve this noble count :  
All the occurrence of my fortune since  
Hath been between this lady, and this lord.

*Seb.* So comes it, lady, you have been mistook :

[*To OLIVIA.*  
But nature to her bias drew in that.  
You would have been contracted to a maid ;  
Nor are you therein, by my life, deceiv'd,  
You are betroth'd both to a maid and man.

*Duke.* Be not amaz'd ; right noble is his blood.—  
If this be so, as yet the glass seems true,  
I shall have share in this most happy wreck :  
Boy, thou hast said to me a thousand times, [*To VIOLA.*  
Thou never should'st love woman like to me.

*Vio.* And all those sayings will I over-swear ;  
And all those swearings keep as true in soul,  
As doth that orb'd continent the fire  
That severs day from night.

*Duke.* Give me thy hand ;  
And let me see thee in thy woman's weeds.

*Vio.* The captain that did bring me first on shore,  
Hath my maid's garments : he, upon some action,  
Is now in durance ; at Malvolio's suit,  
A gentleman, and follower of my lady's.

*Oli.* He shall enlarge him :—Fetch Malvolio hither :—  
And yet, alas, now I remember me,  
They say, poor gentleman, he's much distract.

*Re-enter Clown, with a letter.*

A most extracting frenzy of mine own  
From my remembrance clearly banish'd his.—  
How does he, sirrah ?



*Clo.* Truly, madam, he holds Belzebub at the stave's end, as well as a man in his case may do: he has here writ a letter to you, I should have given it to you to-day morning; but as a madman's epistles are no gospels, so it skills not much when they are delivered.

*Oli.* Open it, and read it.

*Clo.* Look then to be well edified, when the fool delivers the madman:—*By the Lord, madam,*—

*Oli.* How now! art thou mad?

*Clo.* No, madam, I do but read madness: an your ladyship will have it as it ought to be, you must allow *vox.*

*Oli.* Pr'ythee, read i'thy right wits.

*Clo.* So I do, madonna; but to read his right wits, is to read thus: therefore perpend, my princess, and give ear.

*Oli.* Read it you, sirrah. [To FABIAN.]

*Fab.* [reads.] *By the Lord, madam, you wrong me, and the world shall know it: though you have put me into darkness, and given your drunken cousin rule over me, yet have I the benefit of my senses as well as your ladyship. I have your own letter that induced me to the semblance I put on; with the which I doubt not but to do myself much right, or you much shame. Think of me as you please. I leave my duty a little unthought of, and speak out of my injury. The madly-used Malvolio.*

*Oli.* Did he write this?

*Clo.* Ay, madam.

*Duke.* This savours not much of distraction.

*Oli.* See him deliver'd, Fabian; bring him hither.

[Exit FABIAN]

My lord, so please you, these things further thought on,  
To think me as well a sister as a wife,



One day shall crown the alliance on't, so please you,  
Here at my house, and at my proper cost.

*Duke.* Madam, I am most apt to embrace your  
offer.—

Your master quits you; [*To VIOLA.*] and, for your  
service done him,

So much against the mettle of your sex,  
So far beneath your soft and tender breeding,  
And since you call'd me master for so long,  
Here is my hand; you shall from this time be  
Your master's mistress.

*Oli.* A sister?—you are she.

*Re-enter FABIAN, with MALVOLIO.*

*Duke.* Is this the madman?

*Oli.* Ay, my lord, this same;

How now, Malvolio?

*Mal.* Madam, you have done me wrong,  
Notorious wrong.

*Oli.* Have I, Malvolio? no.

*Mal.* Lady, you have. Pray you, peruse that letter:  
You must not now deny it is your hand,  
Write from it, if you can, in hand, or phrase;  
Or say, 'tis not your seal, nor your invention:  
You can say none of this: Well, grant it then,  
And tell me, in the modesty of honour,  
Why you have given me such clear lights of favour,  
Bade me come smiling, and cross-garter'd to you,  
To put on yellow stockings, and to frown  
Upon sir Toby, and the lighter people:  
And, acting this in an obedient hope,  
Why have you suffer'd me to be imprison'd,  
Kept in a dark house, visited by the priest,



And made the most notorious geck, and gull,  
That e'er invention play'd on? tell me why.

*Oli.* Alas, Malvolio, this is not my writing,  
Though, I confess, much like the character.  
But, out of question, 'tis Maria's hand.  
And now I do bethink me, it was she  
First told me, thou wast mad; then cam'st in smiling  
And in such forms which here were presuppos'd  
Upon thee in the letter. Pr'ythee, be content:  
This practice hath most shrewdly pass'd upon thee;  
But, when we know the grounds and authors of it,  
Thou shalt be both the plaintiff and the judge  
Of thine own cause.

*Fab.* Good madam, hear me speak;  
And let no quarrel, nor no brawl to come,  
Taint the condition of this present hour,  
Which I have wonder'd at. In hope it shall not,  
Most freely I confess, myself, and Toby,  
Set this device against Malvolio here,  
Upon some stubborn and uncourteous parts  
We had conceiv'd against him: Maria writ  
The letter, at sir Toby's great importance;  
In recompense whereof, he hath married her.  
How with a sportful malice it was follow'd,  
May rather pluck on laughter than revenge;  
If that the injuries be justly weigh'd,  
That have on both sides past.

*Oli.* Alas, poor fool! how have they baffled thee!

*Clo.* Why, some are born great, some achieve greatness,  
and some have greatness thrown upon them. I was one,  
sir, in this interlude; one sir Topas, sir; but that's all  
one:—By the Lord, fool, I am not mad;—But do you  
remember? Madam, why laugh you at such a barren



*rascal? an you smile not, he's gagg'd: And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.*

*Mal.* I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you. [Exit.

*Oli.* He hath been most notoriously abus'd.

*Duke.* Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace. —

He hath not told us of the captain yet;  
When that is known and golden time convents,  
A solemn combination shall be made  
Of our dear souls—Mean time, sweet sister,  
We will not part from hence.—Cesario, come;  
For so you shall be, while you are a man;  
But, when in other habits you are seen,  
Orsino's mistress, and his fancy's queen. [Exeunt

SONG.

*Clo.* *When that I was and a little tiny boy,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
A foolish thing was but a toy,  
For the rain it raineth every day.*

*But when I came to man's estate,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
'Gainst knave and thief men shut their gate,  
For the rain it raineth every day.*

*But when I came, alas! to wive,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
By swaggering could I never thrive,  
For the rain it raineth every day.*

*But when I came unto my bed,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
With toss-pots still had drunken head,  
For the rain it raineth every day.*

*A great while ago the world begun,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
But that's all one, our play is done,  
And we'll strive to please you every day.* [Exit.



*Much Ado About Nothing.* The story is taken from  
Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* B. V. Part.

It is true, as Mr. Pope has observed, that somewhat  
resembling the story of this play is to be found in the fifth  
Book of the *Orlando Furioso*. In Spenser's *Fairy Queen*,  
B. II. c. iv. we perceive no original may be traced. A novel,  
however, of Belleforest, copied from another of the same  
series, is supposed to have furnished Shakespeare with his plot. It is  
approach nearer to all its particulars than any other  
we, than any other performance known to exist. It  
has been so many times from this once popular story

# MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Ariosto is continually quoted for the fable of *Much Ado*  
about *Nothing*; but I suspect our poet to have been satis-  
fied with the *Giocosa* of Tiberius. (The tale says  
Harrington) is a pretty comical matter, and hath the ver-  
sion in English, some few years past, translated and  
with good grace, by M. George Tiberius. *London*, 1601, p. 39. FRANK.

I suppose this comedy to have been written in 1600, in  
which year it was printed. See *An Attempt to ascertain*  
*the Order of Shakespeare's Plays*, Vol. II. Malone.



And thus the  
 whilom of your days in his revenge.

And I am bound to the whole pack of you (I'll it)

And the first-born shall be my enemy thus it.

And I am bound to the whole pack of you (I'll it)

And the first-born shall be my enemy thus it.

And I am bound to the whole pack of you (I'll it)

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And I am bound to the whole pack of you (I'll it)



**MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.]** The story is taken from Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* B. V. POPE.

It is true, as Mr. Pope has observed, that somewhat resembling the story of this play is to be found in the fifth Book of the *Orlando Furioso*. In Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, B. II. c. iv. as remote an original may be traced. A novel, however, of Belleforest, copied from another of Bandello, seems to have furnished Shakespeare with his fable, as it approaches nearer in all its particulars to the play before us, than any other performance known to be extant. I have seen so many versions from this once popular collection, that I entertain no doubt but that a great majority of the tales it comprehends have made their appearance in an English dress. Of that particular story which I have just mentioned, viz. the 18th history in the third volume, no translation has hitherto been met with.

This play was entered at Stationers' Hall, Aug. 23, 1600.  
STEEVENS.

Ariosto is continually quoted for the fable of *Much Ado about Nothing*; but I suspect our poet to have been satisfied with the *Geneura* of Turberville. "The tale (says Harington) is a pretie comical matter, and hath bin written in *English* verse some few years past, learnedly and with good grace, by M. George Turbevil." *Ariosto*, fol. 1591, p. 39. FARMER.

I suppose this comedy to have been written in 1600, in which year it was printed. See *An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakespeare's Plays*, Vol. II. MALONE.



## PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MUCH ABOUT NOTHING. The story is taken from Ariosto, Or. Fur. B. V. Part.



It is true, as Mr. Pope has observed, that somewhat resembling the story of this play is to be found in the fifth Book of the Orlando Furioso.

**DON PEDRO**, prince of Arragon.

**DON JOHN**, his bastard brother.

**CLAUDIO**, a young lord of Florence, favourite to Don Pedro.

**BENEDICK**, a young lord of Padua, favourite likewise of Don Pedro.

**LEONATO**, governor of Messina.

**ANTONIO**, his brother.

**BALTHAZAR**, servant to Don Pedro.

**BORACHIO**, } followers of Don John.

**CONRADE**, }

**DOGBERRY**, } two foolish officers.

**VERGES**, }

*A Sexton.*

*A Friar.*

*A Boy.*

**HERO**, daughter to Leonato.

**BEATRICE**, niece to Leonato.

**MARGARET**, } gentlewomen attending on Hero.

**URSULA**, }

*Messengers, Watch, and Attendants.*

**SCENE**, Messina.



ACT I. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

# MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.—*Before Leonato's house.*

*Enter* LEONATO, HERO, BEATRICE, and others, with a Messenger.

*Leon.* I learn in this letter, that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

*Mess.* He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

*Leon.* How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

*Mess.* But few of any sort, and none of name.

*Leon.* A victory is twice itself, when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here, that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine, called Claudio.

*Mess.* Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro: He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age; doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion: he hath, indeed, better



bettered expectation, than you must expect of me to tell you how.

*Leon.* He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

*Mess.* I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

*Leon.* Did he break out into tears?

*Mess.* In great measure.

*Leon.* A kind overflow of kindness: There are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy, than to joy at weeping?

*Beat.* I pray you, is signior Montanto returned from the wars, or no?

*Mess.* I know none of that name, lady; there was none such in the army of any sort.

*Leon.* What is he that you ask for, niece?

*Hero.* My cousin means signior Benedick of Padua.

*Mess.* O, he is returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

*Beat.* He set up his bills here in Messina, and challenged Cupid at the flight: and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt.—I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

*Leon.* Faith, niece, you tax signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

*Mess.* He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

*Beat.* You had musty victual, and he hath holp to



eat it: he is a very valiant trencher-man. he hath an excellent stomach.

*Mess.* And a good soldier too, lady.

*Beat.* And a good soldier to a lady;—But what is he to a lord?

*Mess.* A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues.

*Beat.* It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man: but for the stuffing,—Well, we are all mortal.

*Leon.* You must not, sir, mistake my niece: there is a kind of merry war betwixt signior Benedick and her: they never meet, but there is a skirmish of wit between them.

*Beat.* Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict, four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature.—Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

*Mess.* Is it possible?

*Beat.* Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat, it ever changes with the next block.

*Mess.* I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

*Beat.* No: an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now, that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

*Mess.* He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

*Beat.* O Lord! he will hang upon him like a



disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cured.

*Mess.* I will hold friends with you, lady.

*Beat.* Do, good friend.

*Leon.* You will never run mad, niece.

*Beat.* No, not till a hot January.

*Mess.* Don Pedro is approached.

*Enter Don PEDRO, attended by BALTHAZAR and others,  
Don JOHN, CLAUDIO, and BENEDICK.*

*D. Pedro.* Good signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

*Leon.* Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but, when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

*D. Pedro.* You embrace your charge too willingly.—I think, this is your daughter.

*Leon.* Her mother hath many times told me so.

*Bene.* Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

*Leon.* Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

*D. Pedro.* You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself:—Be happy, lady! for you are like an honourable father.

*Bene.* If signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders, for all Messina, as like him as she is.

*Beat.* I wonder, that you will still be talking, signior Benedick; no body marks you.



*Bene.* What, my dear lady Disdain! are you yet living?

*Beat.* Is it possible, disdain should die, while she hath such meet food to feed it, as signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

*Bene.* Then is courtesy a turn-coat:—But it is certain, I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

*Beat.* A dear happiness to women; they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God, and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that; I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

*Bene.* God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

*Beat.* Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

*Bene.* Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

*Beat.* A bird of my tongue, is better than a beast of yours.

*Bene.* I would, my horse had the speed of your tongue; and so good a continuer: But keep your way o' God's name; I have done.

*Beat.* You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.

*D. Pedro.* This is the sum of all: Leonato,—signior Claudio, and signior Benedick,—my dear friend Leonato, hath invited you all. I tell him, we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays, some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.



*Leon.* If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn.—Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

*D. John.* I thank you: I am not of many words but I thank you.

*Leon.* Please it your grace lead on?

*D. Pedro.* Your hand, Leonato; we will go together

[*Exeunt all but BENEDICK and CLAUDIO*]

*Claud.* Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of signior Leonato?

*Bene.* I noted her not; but I looked on her.

*Claud.* Is she not a modest young lady?

*Bene.* Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgement; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

*Claud.* No, I pray thee, speak in sober judgement.

*Bene.* Why, i'faith, methinks she is too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her; that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

*Claud.* Thou thinkest, I am in sport; I pray thee, tell me truly how thou likest her.

*Bene.* Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

*Claud.* Can the world buy such a jewel?

*Bene.* Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack; to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?



*Claud.* In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

*Bene.* I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty, as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope, you have no intent to turn husband; have you?

*Claud.* I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

*Bene.* Is it come to this, i'faith? Hath not the world one man, but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i'faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays. Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

*Re-enter DON PEDRO.*

*D. Pedro.* What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

*Bene.* I would, your grace would constrain me to tell.

*D. Pedro.* I charge thee on thy allegiance

*Bene.* You hear, count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but on my allegiance.—mark you this, on my allegiance:—He is in love. With who?—now that is your grace's part.—Mark, how short his answer is:—With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

*Claud.* If this were so, so were it uttered.

*Bene.* Like the old tale, my lord: it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but, indeed, God forbid it should be so.



*Claud.* If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

*D. Pedro.* Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

*Claud.* You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* By my troth, I speak my thought.

*Claud.* And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

*Bene.* And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

*Claud.* That I love her, I feel.

*D. Pedro.* That she is worthy, I know.

*Bene.* That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake.

*D. Pedro.* Thou wast ever an obstinate heretick in the despite of beauty.

*Claud.* And never could maintain his part, but in the force of his will.

*Bene.* That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me: Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is, (for the which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.

*D. Pedro.* I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

*Bene.* With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove, that ever I lose more blood with love, than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and



hang me up at the door of a brothel-house, for the sign of blind Cupid.

*D. Pedro.* Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

*Bene.* If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.

*D. Pedro.* Well, as time shall try:  
*In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.*

*Bene.* The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead: and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write, *Here is good horse to hire*, let them signify under my sign,—*Here you may see Benedick the married man.*

*Claud.* If this should ever happen, thou would'st be horn-mad.

*D. Pedro.* Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

*Bene.* I look for an earthquake too then.

*D. Pedro.* Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the mean time, good signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's; commend me to him, and tell him, I will not fail him at supper; for, indeed, he hath made great preparation.

*Bene.* I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassy; and so I commit you—

*Claud.* To the tuition of God: From my house, (if I had it,)—

*D. Pedro.* The sixth of July: Your loving friend, Benedick.

*Bene.* Nay, mock not, mock not: The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the



guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience; and so I leave you. [Exit BENEDICK.

*Claud.* My liege, your nighness now may do me good.

*D. Pedro.* My love is thine to teach; teach it but how,

And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn  
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

*Claud.* Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

*D. Pedro.* No child but Hero, she's his only heir:  
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

*Claud.* O my lord,  
When you went onward on this ended action,  
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,  
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand  
Than to drive liking to the name of love:  
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts  
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms  
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,  
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,  
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

*D. Pedro.* Thou wilt be like a lover presently,  
And tire the hearer with a book of words:  
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it;  
And I will break with her, and with her father,  
And thou shalt have her: Was't not to this end,  
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

*Claud.* How sweetly do you minister to love,  
That know love's grief by his complexion! —  
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,  
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

*D. Pedro.* What need the bridge much broader than  
the flood?



The fairest grant is the necessity :  
 Look, what will serve, is fit: 'tis once, thou lov'st ;  
 And I will fit thee with the remedy.  
 I know, we shall have revelling to-night ;  
 I will assume thy part in some disguise,  
 And tell fair Hero I am Claudio ;  
 And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,  
 And take her hearing prisoner with the force  
 And strong encounter of my amorous tale :  
 Then, after, to her father will I break ;  
 And, the conclusion is, she shall be thine :  
 In practice let us put it presently. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*A room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO.*

*Leon.* How now, brother? Where is my cousin, your son? Hath he provided this musick?

*Ant.* He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamed not of.

*Leon.* Are they good?

*Ant.* As the event stamps them ; but they have a good cover, they show well outward. The prince and count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in my orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: The prince discovered to Claudio, that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance ; and, if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly break with you of it.

*Leon.* Hath the fellow any wit, that told you this?

*Ant.* A good sharp fellow: I will send for him, and question him yourself.



*Leon.* No, no; we will hold it as a dream, till it appear itself:—but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you, and tell her of it. [*Several persons cross the stage.*] Cousins, you know what you have to do.—O, I cry you mercy, friend; you go with me, and I will use your skill:—Good cousins, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Another room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter Don JOHN and CONRADE.*

*Con.* What the goujere, my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

*D. John.* There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it, therefore the sadness is without limit.

*Con.* You should hear reason.

*D. John.* And when I have heard it, what blessing bringeth it?

*Con.* If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

*D. John.* I wonder, that thou being (as thou say'st thou art) born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend to no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour.

*Con.* Yea, but you must not make the full show of this, till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root, but by the fair weather



that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

*D. John.* I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied that I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage: If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

*Con.* Can you make no use of your discontent?

*D. John.* I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here? What news, Borachio?

*Enter BORACHIO.*

*Bora.* I came yonder from a great supper; the prince, your brother, is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

*D. John.* Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool, that betroths himself to unquietness?

*Bora.* Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

*D. John.* Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

*Bora.* Even he.

*D. John.* A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

*Bora.* Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

*D. John.* A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?



*Bora.* Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras; and there heard it agreed upon, that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to count Claudio.

*D. John.* Come, come, let us thither; this may prove food to my displeasure: that young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way: You are both sure, and will assist me?

*Con.* To the death, my lord.

*D. John.* Let us to the great supper; their cheer is the greater, that I am subdued: 'Would the cook were of my mind!—Shall we go prove what's to be done?

*Bora.* We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

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## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*A hall in Leonato's house.*

*Enter* LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, and others.

*Leon.* Was not count John here at supper?

*Ant.* I saw him not.

*Beat.* How tartly that gentleman, looks! I never can see him, but I am heart-burned an hour after

*Hero.* He is of a very melancholy disposition.

*Beat.* He were an excellent man, that were made just in the mid-way between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the



other, too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

*Leon.* Then half signior Benedick's tongue in count John's mouth, and half count John's melancholy in signior Benedick's face,—

*Beat.* With a good leg, and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world,—if he could get her good will.

*Leon.* By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

*Ant.* In faith, she is too curst.

*Beat.* Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way: for it is said, *God sends a curst cow short horns*; but to a cow too curst he sends none.

*Leon.* So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

*Beat.* Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing, I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening: Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face; I had rather lie in the woollen.

*Leon.* You may light upon a husband, that hath no beard.

*Beat.* What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard, is more than a youth; and he that hath no beard, is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth, is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-herd, and lead his apes into hell.

*Leon.* Well then, go you into hell?



*Beat.* No; but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, *Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids:* so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

*Ant.* Well, niece, [*To HERO.*] I trust, you will be ruled by your father.

*Beat.* Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make courtesy, and say, *Father, as it please you:*—but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say, *Father, as it please me.*

*Leon.* Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

*Beat.* Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

*Leon.* Daughter, remember, what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

*Beat.* The fault will be in the musick, cousin, if you be not woo'd in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him, there is measure in every thing, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero; Wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with



his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

*Leon.* Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

*Beat.* I have a good eye, uncle ; I can see a church by day-light.

*Leon.* The revellers are entering ; brother, make good room.

*Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR ; Don JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, and others, masked.*

*D. Pedro.* Lady, will you walk about with your friend ?

*Hero.* So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk ; and, especially, when I walk away.

*D. Pedro.* With me in your company ?

*Hero.* I may say so, when I please.

*D. Pedro.* And when please you to say so ?

*Hero.* When I like your favour ; for God defend, the lute should be like the case !

*D. Pedro.* My visor is Philemon's roof ; within the house is Jove.

*Hero.* Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.

*D. Pedro.* Speak low, if you speak love.

[ *Takes her aside.*

*Bene.* Well, I would you did like me.

*Marg.* So would not I, for your own sake ; for I have many ill qualities.

*Bene.* Which is one ?

*Marg.* I say my prayers aloud.

*Bene.* I love you the better ; the hearers may cry. Amen.



*Marg.* God match me with a good dancer!

*Balth.* Amen.

*Marg.* And God keep him out of my sight, when the dance is done!—Answer, clerk.

*Balth.* No more words; the clerk is answered.

*Urs.* I know you well enough; you are signior Antonio.

*Ant.* At a word, I am not.

*Urs.* I know you by the waggling of your head.

*Ant.* To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

*Urs.* You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man: Here's his dry hand up and down; you are he, you are he.

*Ant.* At a word, I am not.

*Urs.* Come, come; do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.

*Beat.* Will you not tell me who told you so?

*Bene.* No, you shall pardon me.

*Beat.* Nor will you not tell me who you are?

*Bene.* Not now.

*Beat.* That I was disdainful,—and that I had my good wit out of the *Hundred merry Tales*;—Well, this was signior Benedick that said so.

*Bene.* What's he?

*Beat.* I am sure, you know him well enough.

*Bene.* Not I, believe me.

*Beat.* Did he never make you laugh?

*Bene.* I pray you, what is he?

*Beat.* Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy: for he both



pleaseth men, and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him: I am sure, he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded me.

*Bene.* When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

*Beat.* Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not marked, or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge' wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Musick within.*] We must follow the leaders.

*Bene.* In every good thing.

*Beat.* Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[*Dance. Then exeunt all but Don JOHN, BORACHIO, and CLAUDIO.*]

*D. John.* Sure, my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: The ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

*Bora.* And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

*D. John.* Are not you signior Benedick?

*Claud.* You know me well; I am he.

*D. John.* Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her, she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

*Claud.* How know you he loves her?

*D. John.* I heard him swear his affection.

*Bora.* So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.



*D. John.* Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Don JOHN and BORACHIO*]

*Claud.* Thus answer I in name of Benedick,  
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.—  
'Tis certain so ;—the prince wooes for himself.  
Friendship is constant in all other things,  
Save in the office and affairs of love ;  
Therefore, all hearts in love use their own tongues ,  
Let every eye negotiate for itself,  
And trust no agent : for beauty is a witch,  
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.  
This is an accident of hourly proof,  
Which I mistrusted not : Farewell therefore, Hero !

*Re-enter BENEDICK.*

*Bene.* Count Claudio ?

*Claud.* Yea, the same.

*Bene.* Come, will you go with me ?

*Claud.* Whither ?

*Bene.* Even to the next willow, about your own business, count. What fashion will you wear the garland of ? About your neck, like an usurer's chain ? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf ? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

*Claud.* I wish him joy of her.

*Bene.* Why, that's spoken like an honest drover ; so they sell bullocks. . But did you think, the prince would have served you thus ?

*Claud.* I pray you, leave me.

*Bene.* Ho ! now you strike like the blind man ; twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

*Claud.* If it will not be, I'll leave you. [Exit



*Bene.* Alas, poor hurt fowl! Now will he creep into sedges.—But, that my lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool!—Ha! it may be, I go under that title, because I am merry.—Yea; but so; I am apt to do myself wrong: I am not so reputed: it is the base, the bitter disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

*Re-enter Don PEDRO, HERO, and LEONATO.*

*D. Pedro.* Now, signior, where's the count; Did you see him?

*Bene.* Troth, my lord, I have played the part of lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren; I told him, and, I think, I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of this young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

*D. Pedro.* To be whipped! What's his fault?

*Bene.* The flat transgression of a school-boy; who, being overjoy'd with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

*D. Pedro.* Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

*Bene.* Yet it had not been amiss, the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself; and the rod he might have bestow'd on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's nest.

*D. Pedro.* I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.



*Bene.* If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

*D. Pedro.* The lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman, that danced with her, told her, she is much wronged by you.

*Bene.* O, she misused me past the endurance of a block; an oak, but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her: She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester; that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance, upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me: She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her, she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed: she would have made Hercules have turned spit; yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Até in good apparel. I would to God, some scholar would conjure her; for, certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow her.

*Re-enter CLAUDIO and BEATRICE.*

*D. Pedro.* Look, here she comes.

*Bene.* Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes, that you can devise to send me



on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassy to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy: You have no employment for me?

*D. Pedro.* None, but to desire your good company.

*Bene.* O God, sir, here's a dish I love not; I cannot endure my lady Tongue. [Exit.

*D. Pedro.* Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of signior Benedick.

*Beat.* Indeed, my lord, he lent it me a while; and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one: marry, once before, he won it of me with false dice, therefore your grace may well say, I have lost it.

*D. Pedro.* You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

*Beat.* So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

*D. Pedro.* Why, how now, count? wherefore are you sad?

*Claud.* Not sad, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* How then? Sick?

*Claud.* Neither, my lord.

*Beat.* The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil, count; civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

*D. Pedro.* I'faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and



his good will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

*Leon.* Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

*Beat.* Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

*Claud.* Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much.—Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

*Beat.* Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak, neither.

*D. Pedro.* In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

*Beat.* Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care:—My cousin tells him his ear, that he is in her heart.

*Claud.* And so she doth, cousin.

*Beat.* Good lord, for alliance!—Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burned; I may sit in a corner, and cry, heigh ho! for a husband.

*D. Pedro.* Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

*Beat.* I would rather have one of your father's getting: Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

*D. Pedro.* Will you have me, lady?

*Beat.* No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days; your grace is too costly to wear every day:—But, I beseech your grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

*D. Pedro.* Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.



*Beat.* No, sure, my lord, my mother cry'd; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born.—Cousins, God give you joy!

*Leon.* Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

*Beat.* I cry you mercy, uncle.—By your grace's pardon. [Exit BEATRICE.]

*D. Pedro.* By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

*Leon.* There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad, but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness, and waked herself with laughing.

*D. Pedro.* She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

*Leon.* O, by no means; she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

*D. Pedro.* She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

*Leon.* O lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

*D. Pedro.* Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

*Claud.* To-morrow, my lord: Time goes on crutches, till love have all his rites.

*Leon.* Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind.

*D. Pedro.* Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us; I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring signior Benedick and the lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, the one with the other. I



would fain have it a match ; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

*Leon.* My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

*Claud.* And I, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* And you too, gentle Hero ?

*Hero.* I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

*D. Pedro.* And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know : thus far can I praise him ; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick :— and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer ; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*Another room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter Don JOHN and BORACHIO.*

*D. John.* It is so ; the count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

*Bora.* Yea, my lord but I can cross it.

*D. John.* Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me : I am sick in displeasure to him ; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage ?



*Bora.* Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

*D. John.* Show me briefly how.

*Bora.* I think, I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

*D. John.* I remember.

*Bora.* I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window.

*D. John.* What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

*Bora.* The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero

*D. John.* What proof shall I make of that?

*Bora.* Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato: Look you for any other issue?

*D. John.* Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.

*Bora.* Go then, find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the count Claudio, alone: tell them, that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour who hath made this match; and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood, than to see me at her chamber-window;



hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me Borachio; and bring them to see this, the very night before the intended wedding: for, in the mean time, I will so fashion the matter, that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be call'd assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

*D. John.* Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

*Bora.* Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

*D. John.* I will presently go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Leonato's garden.

*Enter BENEDICK and a Boy.*

*Bene.* Boy,—

*Boy.* Signior.

*Bene.* In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.

*Boy.* I am here already, sir.

*Bene.* I know that;—but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit Boy.*]  
—I do much wonder, that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn, by falling in love: And such a man is Claudio. I have known, when there was no musick with him but the drum and fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known, when he would have walked ten mile



afoot, to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man, and a soldier; and now is he turn'd orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair; yet I am well: another is wise; yet I am well: another virtuous; yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [*Withdraws.*]

*Enter Don PEDRO, LEONATO, and CLAUDIO.*

*D. Pedro.* Come, shall we hear this musick?

*Claud.* Yea, my good lord:—How still the evening is,  
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

*D. Pedro.* See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

*Claud.* O, very well, my lord: the musick ended,  
We'll fit the kid-fox with a penny-worth.

*Enter BALTHAZAR, with musick.*

*D. Pedro.* Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song  
again



*Balth.* O good my lord, tax not so bad a voice  
To slander musick any more than once.

*D. Pedro.* It is the witness still of excellency,  
To put a strange face on his own perfection:—  
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

*Balth.* Because you talk of wooing, I will sing:  
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit  
To her he thinks not worthy; yet he woos;  
Yet will he swear, he loves.

*D. Pedro.* Nay, pray thee, come:  
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,  
Do it in notes.

*Balth.* Note this before my notes,  
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

*D. Pedro.* Why these are very crotchets that he  
speaks; [Musick.]  
Note, notes, forsooth, and noting!

*Bene.* Now, *Divine air!* now is his soul ravished:—  
Is it not strange, that sheeps' guts should hale souls  
out of men's bodies?—Well, a horn for my money  
when all's done.

*BALTHAZAR sings.*

I.

*Balth.* Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,  
Men were deceivers ever;

One foot in sea, and one on shore;

To ore thing constant never:

Then sigh not so,

But let them go,

And be you blith and bonny;

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into, Hey nonny, nonny.



II.

*Sing no more ditties, sing no mo  
Of dumps so dull and heavy;  
The fraud of men was ever so,  
Since summer first was leavy.  
Then sigh not so, &c.*

*D. Pedro.* By my troth, a good song.

*Balth.* And an ill singer, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* Ha? no; no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

*Bene.* [*Aside.*] An he had been a dog, that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him: and, I pray God, his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have heard the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

*D. Pedro.* Yea, marry; [*To CLAUDIO.*]—Dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent musick; for to-morrow night we would have it at the lady Hero's chamber-window.

*Balth.* The best I can, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* Do so: farewell. [*Exeunt BALTHAZAR and musick.*] Come hither, Leonato: What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with signior Benedick?

*Claud.* O, ay:—Stalk on, stalk on: the fowl sits [*Aside to PEDRO.*] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

*Leon.* No, nor I neither; but most wonderful, that she should so dote on signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

*Bene.* Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner? [*Aside.*]

*Leon.* By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to



think of it; but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the infinite of thought.

*D. Pedro.* May be, she doth but counterfeit.

*Claud.* 'Faith, like enough.

*Leon.* O God! counterfeit! There never was counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion, as she discovers it.

*D. Pedro.* Why, what effects of passion shows she?

*Claud.* Bait the hook well; this fish will bite. [*Aside.*

*Leon.* What effects, my lord! She will sit you,—  
You heard my daughter tell you how.

*Claud.* She did, indeed.

*D. Pedro.* How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

*Leon.* I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

*Bene.* [*Aside.*] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide itself in such reverence.

*Claud.* He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up.

*D. Pedro.* Hath she made her affection known to Benedick? [*Aside*

*Leon.* No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

*Claud.* 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: Shall I, says she, that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?

*Leon.* This says she now when she is beginning to write to him: for she'll be up twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smock, till she have writ a sheet of paper:—my daughter tells us all.



*Claud.* Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

*Leon.* O!—When she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?—

*Claud.* That.

*Leon.* O! she tore the letter into a thousand half-pence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: *I measure him, says she, by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.*

*Claud.* Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses;—*O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!*

*Leon.* She doth indeed; my daughter says so: and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometime afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself; It is very true.

*D. Pedro.* It were good, that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

*Claud.* To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

*D. Pedro.* An he should, it were an alms to hang him: She's an excellent sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

*Claud.* And she is exceeding wise.

*D. Pedro.* In every thing, but in loving Benedick.

*Leon.* O my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one, that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

*D. Pedro.* I would, she had bestowed this dotage on



me; I would have daff'd all other respects, and made her half myself: I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

*Leon.* Were it good, think you?

*Claud.* Hero thinks surely, she will die: for she says, she will die if he love her not; and she will die ere she makes her love known; and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will 'bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

*D. Pedro.* She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

*Claud.* He is a very proper man.

*D. Pedro.* He hath, indeed, a good outward happiness.

*Claud.* 'Fore God, and in my mind, very wise.

*D. Pedro.* He doth, indeed, show some sparks that are like wit.

*Leon.* And I take him to be valiant.

*D. Pedro.* As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most christian-like fear.

*Leon.* If he do fear God, he must necessarily keep peace; if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

*D. Pedro.* And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him, by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece: Shall we go see Benedick, and tell him of her love?

*Claud.* Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

*Leon.* Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.



*D. Pedro.* Well, we'll hear further of it by your daughter; let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

*Leon.* My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

*Claud.* If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation. [*Aside.*

*D. Pedro.* Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and LEONATO.*

*BENEDICK advances from the arbour*

*Bene.* This can be no trick: The conference was sadly borne.—They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady; it seems, her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say, I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection.—I did never think to marry:—I must not seem proud:—Happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say, the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous;—'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me:—By my troth, it is no addition to her wit;—nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her.—

I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of



wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage: But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age: Shall quips, and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No: The world must be peopled. When I said, I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.—Here comes Beatrice: By this day, she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beat.* Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

*Bene.* Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

*Beat.* I took no more pains for those thanks, than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

*Bene.* You take pleasure in the message?

*Beat.* Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal:—You have no stomach, signior; fare you well. *[Exit.*

*Bene.* Ha! *Against my will I am sent to bid you come to dinner*—there's a double meaning in that. *I took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to thank me*—that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks:—If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew: I will go get her picture. *[Exit*



## ACT III.

## SCENE I.—Leonato's garden.

*Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.*

*Hero.* Good Margaret, run thee into the parlour;  
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice  
Proposing with the prince and Claudio:  
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula  
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse  
Is all of her; say, that thou overheard'st us;  
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,  
Where honey-suckles, ripen'd by the sun,  
Forbid the sun to enter;—like favourites,  
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride  
Against that power that bred it:—there will she hide  
her,  
To listen our propose: This is thy office,  
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

*Marg.* I'll make her come, I warrant **you**, presently  
[Exit

*Hero.* Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,  
As we do trace this alley up and down,  
Our talk must only be of Benedick:  
When I do name him, let it be thy part  
To praise him more than ever man did merit:  
My talk to thee must be, how Benedick  
Is sick in love with Beatrice: Of this matter



Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,  
That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin ;

*Enter BEATRICE, behind.*

For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs  
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

*Urs.* The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish  
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,  
And greedily devour the treacherous bait :  
So angle we for Beatrice ; who even now  
Is couched in the woodbine coverture :  
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

*Hero.* Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing  
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.—

*[They advance to the bower.]*

No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful ;  
I know, her spirits are as coy and wild  
As haggards of the rock.

*Urs.* But are you sure,  
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely ?

*Hero.* So says the prince, and my new-trothed lord.

*Urs.* And did they bid you tell her of it, madam ?

*Hero.* They did intreat me to acquaint her of it :  
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,  
To wish him wrestle with affection,  
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

*Urs.* Why did you so ? Doth not the gentleman  
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed,  
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon ?

*Hero.* O God of love ! I know, he doth deserve  
As much as may be yielded to a man :  
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart  
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice :



Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,  
Misprising what they look on; and her wit  
Values itself so highly, that to her  
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,  
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,  
She is so self-endear'd.

*Urs.*                                Sure, I think so;  
And therefore, certainly, it were not good  
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

*Hero.* Why, you speak truth: I never yet saw man,  
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,  
But she would spell him backward: if fair-fac'd  
She'd swear, the gentleman should be her sister;  
If black, why, nature, drawing of an antick,  
Made a foul blot: if tall, a lance ill-headed;  
If low, an agate very vilely cut:  
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;  
If silent, why, a block moved with none.  
So turns she every man the wrong side out;  
And never gives to truth and virtue, that  
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

*Urs.* Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

*Hero.* No: not to be so odd, and from all fashions  
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable:  
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,  
She'd mock me into air; O, she would laugh me  
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.  
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,  
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:  
It were a better death than die with mocks;  
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

*Urs.* Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say

*Hero.* No; rather I will go to Benedick,



And counsel him to fight against his passion :  
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders  
To stain my cousin with : One doth not know,  
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

*Urs.* O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.  
She cannot be so much without true judgement,  
(Having so swift and excellent a wit,  
As she is priz'd to have,) as to refuse  
So rare a gentleman as signior Benedick.

*Hero.* He is the only man of Italy,  
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

*Urs.* I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,  
Speaking my fancy ; signior Benedick,  
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valour,  
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

*Hero.* Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

*Urs.* His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.—  
When are you married, madam ?

*Hero.* Why, every day ;—to-morrow : Come, go in ;  
I'll show thee some attires ; and have thy counsel,  
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

*Urs.* She's lim'd I warrant you ; we have caught her,  
madam.

*Hero.* If it prove so, then loving goes by haps :  
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[*Exeunt HERO and URSULA.*

*BEATRICE advances.*

*Beat.* What fire is in mine ears ? Can this be true,  
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much ?  
Contempt, farewell ! and maiden pride, adieu !  
No glory lives behind the back of such.



And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee ;  
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand ;  
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee  
To bind our loves up in a holy band :  
For others say, thou dost deserve ; and I  
Believe it better than reportingly. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, and LEONATO.*

*D. Pedro.* I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then I go toward Arragon.

*Claud.* I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

*D. Pedro.* Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat, and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company ; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth ; he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him : he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper ; for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.

*Bene.* Gallants, I am not as I have been.

*Leon.* So say I ; methinks, you are sadder.

*Claud.* I hope, he be in love.

*D. Pedro.* Hang him, truant ; there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touch'd with love : if he be sad, he wants money.

*Bene.* I have the tooth-ach.

*D. Pedro.* Draw it.

*Bene.* Hang it !



*Claud.* You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

*D. Pedro.* What? sigh for the tooth-ach?

*Leon.* Where is but a humour, or a worm?

*Bene.* Well, Every one can master a grief, but he that has it.

*Claud.* Yet say I, he is in love.

*D. Pedro.* There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as, to be a Dutch-man to-day; a French-man to-morrow; or in the shape of two countries at once, as, a German from the waist downward, all slops; and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet: Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.

*Claud.* If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: he brushes his hat o' mornings; What should that bode?

*D. Pedro.* Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

*Claud.* No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

*Leon.* Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

*D. Pedro.* Nay, he rubs himself with civet: Can you smell him out by that?

*Claud.* That's as much as to say, The sweet youth's in love.

*D. Pedro.* The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

*Claud.* And when was he wont to wash his face?

*D. Pedro.* Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I hear what they say of him.



*Claud.* Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lutestring, and now governed by stops.

*D. Pedro.* Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him: Conclude, conclude, he is in love.

*Claud.* Nay, but I know who loves him.

*D. Pedro.* That would I know too; I warrant, one that knows him not.

*Claud.* Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

*D. Pedro.* She shall be buried with her face upwards.

*Bene.* Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ach.—Old signior, walk aside with me; I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear. [*Exeunt BENEDICK and LEONATO.*]

*D. Pedro.* For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

*Claud.* 'Tis even so: Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another, when they meet.

*Enter Don JOHN.*

*D. John.* My lord and brother, God save you.

*D. Pedro.* Good den, brother.

*D. John.* If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

*D. Pedro.* In private?

*D. John.* If it please you;—yet count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of, concerns him.

*D. Pedro.* What's the matter?

*D. John.* Means your lordship to be married to-morrow? [*To CLAUDIO.*]

*D. Pedro.* You know, he does.

*D. John.* I know not that, when he knows what I know.



*Claud.* If there be any impediment, I pray you, discover it.

*D. John.* You may think, I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest: For my brother, I think, he holds you well; and in dearness of heart hath help to effect your ensuing marriage: surely, suit ill spent, and labour ill bestowed!

*D. Pedro.* Why, what's the matter?

*D. John.* I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shortened, (for she hath been too long a talking of,) the lady is disloyal.

*Claud.* Who? Hero?

*D. John.* Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, very man's Hero.

*Claud.* Disloyal?

*D. John.* The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse; think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered; even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

*Claud.* May this be so?

*D. Pedro.* I will not think it.

*D. John.* If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

*Claud.* If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow; in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her



*D. Pedro.* And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

*D. John.* I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses : bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

*D. Pedro.* O day untowardly turned !

*Claud.* O mischief strangely thwarting !

*D. John.* O plague right well prevented !  
So will you say, when you have seen the sequel.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A street.*

*Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES, with the Watch.*

*Dogb.* Are you good men and true ?

*Verg.* Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

*Dogb.* Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

*Verg.* Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

*Dogb.* First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable ?

*1 Watch.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal ; for they can write and read.

*Dogb.* Come hither, neighbour Seacoal : God hath blessed you with a good name : to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune ; but to write and read comes by nature.

*2 Watch.* Both which, master constable,——

*Dogb.* You have ; I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour sir, why, give God thanks, and



make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern: This is your charge; You shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

*2 Watch.* How if he will not stand?

*Dogb.* Why then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

*Verg.* If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

*Dogb.* True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects:—You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk, is most tolerable and not to be endured.

*2 Watch.* We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

*Dogb.* Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bills be not stolen:—Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed;

*2 Watch.* How if they will not?

*Dogb.* Why then, let them alone till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you took them for.

*2 Watch.* Well, sir.

*Dogb.* If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man: and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.



*2 Watch.* If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

*Dogb.* Truly, by your office, you may; but, I think, they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is, to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

*Verg.* You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

*Dogb.* Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will; much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

*Verg.* If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it.

*2 Watch.* How if the nurse be asleep, and will not hear us?

*Dogb.* Why then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying: for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes, will never answer a calf when he bleats.

*Verg.* 'Tis very true.

*Dogb.* This is the end of the charge. You, constable are to present the prince's own person; if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

*Verg.* Nay by'r lady, that, I think, he cannot.

*Dogb.* Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him: marry, not without the prince be willing: for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

*Verg.* By'r lady, I think, it be so.

*Dogb.* Ha, ha, ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me:



keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night.—Come, neighbour.

*2 Watch.* Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to-bed.

*Dogb.* One word more, honest neighbours: I pray you, watch about signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night: Adieu, be vigilant, I beseech you.

[*Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES.*]

*Enter BORACHIO and CONRADE.*

*Bora.* What! Conrade,—

*Watch.* Peace, stir not.

[*Aside.*]

*Bora.* Conrade, I say!

*Con.* Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

*Bora.* Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought, there would a scab follow.

*Con.* I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

*Bora.* Stand thee close then under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

*Watch.* [*Aside.*] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

*Bora.* Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

*Con.* Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

*Bora.* Thou should'st rather ask, if it were possible any villainy should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.



*Con.* I wonder at it.

*Bora.* That shows, thou art unconfirmed: Thou knowest, that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

*Con.* Yes, it is apparel.

*Bora.* I mean, the fashion.

*Con.* Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

*Bora.* Tush! I may as well say, the fool's the fool. But see'st thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

*Watch.* I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief this seven year; he goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

*Bora.* Didst thou not hear somebody?

*Con.* No; 'twas the vane on the house.

*Bora.* Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods, between fourteen and five and thirty? sometime, fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting; sometime, like god Bel's priests in the old church window; sometime, like the shaver Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-piece seems as massy as his club?

*Con.* All this I see; and see, that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man: But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

*Bora.* Not so neither: but know, that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero; she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee, how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted, and



placed, and possessed by my master Don John, saw far off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

*Con.* And thought they, Margaret was Hero?

*Bora.* Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw over-night, and send her home again without a husband.

*1 Watch.* We charge you in the prince's name, stand.

*2 Watch.* Call up the right master constable: We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

*1 Watch.* And one Deformed is one of them; I know him, he wears a lock.

*Con.* Masters, masters.

*2 Watch.* You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

*Con.* Masters,—

*1 Watch.* Never speak; we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.

*Bora.* We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

*Con.* A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. [Exeunt.]



SCENE IV.—*A room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.*

*Hero.* Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

*Urs.* I will, lady.

*Hero.* And bid her come hither.

*Urs.* Well. [*Exit URSULA.*]

*Marg.* Troth, I think, your other rabato were better.

*Hero.* No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

*Marg.* By my troth, it's not so good; and I warrant, your cousin will say so.

*Hero.* My cousin's a fool, and thou art another; I'll wear none but this.

*Marg.* I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner: and your gown's a most rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the duchess of Milan's gown, that they praise so.

*Hero.* O, that exceeds, they say.

*Marg.* By my troth it's but a night-gown in respect of yours: Cloth of gold, and cuts, and laced with silver; set with pearls, down sleeves, side-sleeves, and skirts round, underborne with a blueish tinsel: but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

*Hero.* God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy!

*Marg.* 'Twill be heavier soon, by the weight of a man.

*Hero.* Fye upon thee! art not ashamed?

*Marg.* Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your ord honourable without marriage? I think, you



would have me say, saving your reverence,—*a husband*: an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend no body: Is there any harm in—*the heavier for a husband*? None, I think, an it be the right husband, and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: Ask my lady Beatrice else, here she comes.

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Hero.* Good morrow, coz.

*Beat.* Good morrow, sweet Hero.

*Hero.* Why, how now! do you speak in the sick tune?

*Beat.* I am out of all other tune, methinks.

*Marg.* Clap us into—*Light o' love*; that goes without a burden; do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

*Beat.* Yea, *Light o' love*, with your heels!—then if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.

*Marg.* O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

*Beat.* 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth I am exceeding ill:—hey ho!

*Marg.* For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

*Beat.* For the letter that begins them all, H.

*Marg.* Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

*Beat.* What means the fool, trow?

*Marg.* Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

*Hero.* These gloves the count sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

*Beat.* I am stuffed, cousin, I cannot smell



*Marg.* A maid, and stuffed! there's goodly catching of cold.

*Beat.* O, God help me! God help me! how long have you profess'd apprehension?

*Marg.* Ever since you left it: doth not my wit become me rarely?

*Beat.* It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap.—By my troth, I am sick.

*Marg.* Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart; it is the only thing for a qualm.

*Hero.* There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

*Beat.* Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some moral in this Benedictus.

*Marg.* Moral? no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think, perchance, that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love: yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks, you look with your eyes as other women do.

*Beat.* What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

*Marg.* Not a false gallop.

*Re-enter URSULA.*

*Urs.* Madam, withdraw: the prince, the count,



signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants o. the town, are come to fetch you to church.

*Hero.* Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V.—*Another room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter* LEONATO, *with* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

*Leon.* What would you with me, honest neighbour?

*Dogb.* Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that decerns you nearly.

*Leon.* Brief, I pray you; for you see, 'tis a busy time with me.

*Dogb.* Marry, this it is, sir.

*Verg.* Yes, in truth it is, sir.

*Leon.* What is it, my good friends?

*Dogb.* Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest, as the skin between his brows.

*Verg.* Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.

*Dogb.* Comparisons are odorous: *palabras*, neighbour Verges.

*Leon.* Neighbours, you are tedious.

*Dogb.* It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

*Leon.* All thy tediousness on me! ha!

*Dogb.* Yea, and 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis: for I hear as good exclamation on your worship



as of any man in the city ; and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

*Verg.* And so am I.

*Leon.* I would fain know what you have to say.

*Verg.* Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, have ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

*Dogb.* A good old man, sir ; he will be talking ; as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out ; God help us ! it is a world to see !—Well said, i'faith, neighbour Verges :—well, God's a good man ; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind :—An honest soul, i'faith, sir ; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread : but, God is to be worshipped : All men are not alike ; alas good neighbour !

*Leon.* Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

*Dogb.* Gifts, that God gives.

*Leon.* I must leave you.

*Dogb.* One word, sir : our watch, sir, have, indeed, comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

*Leon.* Take their examination yourself, and bring it me ; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

*Dogb.* It shall be suffigance.

*Leon.* Drink some wine ere you go : fare you well.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

*Leon.* I will wait upon them ; I am ready.

*[Exeunt LEONATO and Messenger]*



*Dogb.* Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol; we are now to examination these men.

*Verg.* And we must do it wisely.

*Dogb.* We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that [*Touching his forehead.*] shall drive some of them to a *non com*: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt.*

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## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*The inside of a church.*

*Enter Don PEDRO, Don JOHN, LEONATO, Friar, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, and BEATRICE, &c.*

*Leon.* Come, friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

*Friar.* You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

*Claud.* No.

*Leon.* To be married to her, friar; you come to marry her.

*Friar.* Lady, you come hither to be married to **this** count?

*Hero.* I do.

*Friar.* If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

*Claud.* Know you any, Hero?



*Hero.* None, my lord.

*Friar.* Know you any, count?

*Leon.* I dare make his answer, none.

*Claud.* O, what men dare do! what men may do!  
what men daily do! not knowing what they do!

*Bene.* How now! Interjections? Why, then some  
be of laughing, as, ha! ha! he!

*Claud.* Stand thee by, friar:—Father, by your leave;  
Will you with free and unconstrained soul  
Give me this maid, your daughter?

*Leon.* As freely, son, as God did give her me.

*Claud.* And what have I to give you back, whose  
worth

May counterpoise this rich and precious gift.

*D. Pedro.* Nothing, unless you render her again.

*Claud.* Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankful-  
ness.—

There, Leonato, take her back again;

Give not this rotten orange to your friend;

She's but the sign and semblance of her honour:—

Behold, how like a maid she blushes here:

O, what authority and show of truth

Can cunning sin cover itself withal!

Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,

To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,

All you that see her, that she were a maid,

By these exterior shows? But she is none:

She knows the heat of a luxurious bed:

Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

*Leon.* What do you mean, my lord?

*Claud.* Not to be married,  
Not knit my soul to an approved wanton.

*Leon.* Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof



Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,  
And made defeat of her virginity,—

*Claud.* I know what you would say; If I have  
known her,  
You'll say, she did embrace me as a husband,  
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin:  
No, Leonato,

I never tempted her with word too large;  
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd  
Bashful sincerity, and comely love.

*Hero.* And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

*Claud.* Out on thy seeming! I will write against it:  
You seem to me as Dian in her orb;  
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;  
But you are more intemperate in your blood  
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals  
That rage in savage sensuality.

*Hero.* Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?

*Leon.* Sweet prince, why speak not you?

*D. Pedro.* What should I speak?  
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about  
To link my dear friend to a common stale.

*Leon.* Are these things spoken? or do I but dream?

*D. John.* Sir, they are spoken, and these things are  
true.

*Bene.* This looks not like a nuptial.

*Hero.* True, O God!

*Claud.* Leonato, stand I here?  
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?  
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?

*Leon.* All this is so; But what of this, my lord?

*Claud.* Let me but move one question to your  
daughter;



And, by that fatherly and kindly power  
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

*Leon.* I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

*Hero.* O God defend me! how am I beset?—  
What kind of catechizing call you this?

*Claud.* To make you answer truly to your name.

*Hero.* Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name  
With any just reproach?

*Claud.* Marry, that can Hero;

Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.

What man was he talk'd with you yesternight  
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?

Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

*Hero.* I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* Why, then are you no maiden.—Leonato  
I am sorry you must hear; Upon mine honour,  
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count,  
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,  
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;  
Who hath, indeed, most like a liberal villain,  
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had  
A thousand times in secret.

*D. John.* Fye, fye! they are  
Not to be nam'd, my lord, not to be spoke of;  
There is not chastity enough in language,  
Without offence, to utter them: Thus, pretty lady,  
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

*Claud.* O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been,  
If half thy outward graces had been placed  
About thy thoughts, and counsels of thy heart!  
But, fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,  
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!  
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,



And on my eye-lids shall conjecture hang,  
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,  
And never shall it more be gracious.

*Leon.* Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?

[*HERO swoons*

*Beat.* Why, how now, cousin? wherefore sink you down?

*D. John.* Come, let us go: these things, come thus to light,

Smother her spirits up.

[*Exeunt Don PEDRO, Don JOHN, and CLAUDIO.*

*Bene.* How doth the lady?

*Beat.* Dead, I think;—help, uncle;—  
*Hero!* why, *Hero!*—*Uncle!*—*Signior Benedick!*—  
friar!

*Leon.* O fate, take not away thy heavy hand!  
Death is the fairest cover for her shame,  
That may be wish'd for.

*Beat.* How now, cousin *Hero*?

*Friar.* Have comfort, lady.

*Leon.* Dost thou look up?

*Friar.* Yea; Wherefore should she not?

*Leon.* Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing

Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny  
The story that is printed in her blood?—  
Do not live, *Hero*; do not ope thine eyes:  
For did I think thou would'st not quickly die,  
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,  
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,  
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?  
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?  
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?







In angel whiteness bear away those blushes ;  
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,  
To burn the errors that these princes hold  
Against her maiden truth :—Call me a fool ;  
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,  
Which with experimental seal doth warrant  
The tenour of my book ; trust not my age,  
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,  
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here  
Under some biting error.

*Leon.*

Friar, it cannot be :

Thou seest, that all the grace that she hath left,  
Is, that she will not add to her damnation  
A sin of perjury ; she not denies it :  
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse  
That which appears in proper nakedness ?

*Friar.* Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of ?

*Hero.* They know, that do accuse me ; I know none :  
If I know more of any man alive,  
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,  
Let all my sins lack mercy !—O my father,  
Prove you that any man with me convers'd  
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight  
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,  
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

*Friar.* There is some strange misprision in the  
princes.

*Bene.* Two of them have the very bent of honour ;  
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,  
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,  
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

*Leon.* I know not ; If they speak but truth of her,  
These hands shall tear her ; if they wrong her honour



The proudest of them shall well hear of it.  
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,  
Nor age so eat up my invention,  
Nor fortune made such havock of my means,  
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,  
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,  
Both strength of limb, and policy of mind,  
Ability in means, and choice of friends,  
To quit me of them thoroughly.

*Friar.* Pause a while,  
And let my counsel sway you in this case.  
Your daughter here the princes left for dead;  
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,  
And publish it, that she is dead indeed:  
Maintain a mourning ostentation;  
And on your family's old monument  
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites  
That appertain unto a burial.

*Leon.* What shall become of this? What will this do?

*Friar.* Marry, this, well carried, shall on her behalf  
Change slander to remorse; that is some good:  
But not for that, dream I on this strange course,  
But on this travail look for greater birth.  
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,  
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,  
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd,  
Of every hearer: For it so falls out,  
That what we have we prize not to the worth,  
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,  
Why, then we rack the value; then we find  
The virtue, that possession would not show us  
Whiles it was ours:—So will it fare with Claudio:  
When he shall hear she died upon his words,



The idea of her life shall sweetly creep  
Into his study of imagination ;  
And every lovely organ of her life  
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,  
More moving-delicate, and full of life,  
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,  
Than when she liv'd indeed :—then shall he mourn,  
(If ever love had interest in his liver,)  
And wish he had not so accused her ;  
No, though he thought his accusation true.  
Let this be so, and doubt not but success  
Will fashion the event in better shape  
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.  
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,  
The supposition of the lady's death  
Will quench the wonder of her infamy :  
And, if it sort not well, you may conceal her  
(As best befits her wounded reputation,)  
In some reclusive and religious life,  
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

*Bene.* Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you ;  
And though, you know, my inwardness and love  
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,  
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this  
As secretly, and justly, as your soul  
Should with your body.

*Leon.* Being that I flow in grief,  
The smallest twine may lead me.

*Friar.* 'Tis well consented ; presently away ;  
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.—  
Come, lady, die to live : this wedding day,  
Perhaps, is but prolong'd ; have patience, and endure.

[*Exeunt* Friar, HERO, and LEONATO



*Bene.* Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

*Beat.* Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

*Bene.* I will not desire that.

*Beat.* You have no reason, I do it freely.

*Bene.* Surely, I do believe your fair cousin is wrong'd

*Beat.* Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her!

*Bene.* Is there any way to show such friendship?

*Beat.* A very even way, but no such friend.

*Bene.* May a man do it?

*Beat.* It is a man's office, but not yours.

*Bene.* I do love nothing in the world so well as you; Is not that strange?

*Beat.* As strange as the thing I know not: It were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing:—I am sorry for my cousin.

*Bene.* By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

*Beat.* Do not swear by it, and eat it.

*Bene.* I will swear by it, that you love me; and I will make him eat it, that says, I love not you.

*Beat.* Will you not eat your word?

*Bene.* With no sauce that can be devised to it I protest, I love thee.

*Beat.* Why then, God forgive me!

*Bene.* What offence, sweet Beatrice?

*Beat.* You have staid me in a happy hour; I was about to protest, I loved you.

*Bene.* And do it with all thy heart.

*Beat.* I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

*Bene.* Come, bid me do any thing for thee.



*Beat.* Kill Claudio.

*Bene.* Ha! not for the wide world.

*Beat.* You kill me to deny it: Farewell.

*Bene.* Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

*Beat.* I am gone, though I am here;—There is no love in you:—Nay, I pray you, let me go.

*Bene.* Beatrice,—

*Beat.* In faith, I will go.

*Bene.* We'll be friends first.

*Beat.* You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

*Bene.* Is Claudio thine enemy?

*Beat.* Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman?—O, that I were a man!—What! bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then with publick accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place

*Bene.* Hear me, Beatrice;—

*Beat.* Talk with a man out at a window?—a proper saying!

*Bene.* Nay but, Beatrice;—

*Beat.* Sweet Hero!—she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

*Bene.* Beat—

*Beat.* Princes, and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count-confect; a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that



only tells a lie, and swears it:—I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

*Bene.* Tarry, good Beatrice: By this hand, I love thee.

*Beat.* Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

*Bene.* Think you in your soul the count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

*Beat.* Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul.

*Bene.* Enough, I am engaged, I will challenge him; I will kiss your hand, and so leave you: By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account: As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say, she is dead; and so, farewell.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE II.—*A prison.*

*Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and Sexton, in gowns; and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO.*

*Dogb.* Is our whole dissembly appeared?

*Verg.* O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton!

*Sexton.* Which be the malefactors?

*Dogb.* Marry, that am I and my partner.

*Verg.* Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

*Sexton.* But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

*Dogb.* Yea, marry, let them come before me.—What is your name, friend?

*Bora.* Borachio.

*Dogb.* Pray write down—Borachio.—Yours, sirrah?



*Con.* I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

*Dogb.* Write down—master gentleman Conrade.—Masters, do you serve God?

*Con. Bora.* Yea, sir, we hope.

*Dogb.* Write down—that they hope they serve God:—and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains!—Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

*Con.* Marry, sir, we say we are none.

*Dogb.* A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him.—Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear, sir; I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

*Bora.* Sir, I say to you, we are none.

*Dogb.* Well, stand aside.—'Fore God, they are both in a tale: Have you writ down—that they are none?

*Sexton.* Master constable, you go not the way to examine; you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

*Dogb.* Yea, marry, that's the eftest way:—Let the watch come forth:—Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

*1 Watch.* This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

*Dogb.* Write down—prince John a villain:—Why this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother—villain.

*Bora.* Master constable,—

*Dogb.* Pray thee, fellow, peace; I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

*Sexton.* What heard you him say else?



*2 Watch.* Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the lady Hero wrongfully.

*Dogb.* Flat burglary, as ever was committed.

*Verg.* Yea, by the mass, that it is.

*Sexton.* What else, fellow?

*1 Watch.* And that count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

*Dogb.* O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

*Sexton.* What else?

*2 Watch.* This is all.

*Sexton.* And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this, suddenly died.—Master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's; I will go before, and show him their examination. *[Exit.*

*Dogb.* Come, let them be opinioned.

*Verg.* Let them be in band.

*Con.* Off, coxcomb!

*Dogb.* God's my life! where's the sexton? let him write down—the prince's officer, coxcomb.—Come, bind them:—Thou naughty varlet!

*Con.* Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

*Dogb.* Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years?—O that he were here to write me down—an ass!—but, masters, remember, that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass:—No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by



good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a housholder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him:—Bring him away. O, that I had been writ down—an ass! [Exeunt.

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## ACT V.

### SCENE I.—*Before Leonato's house.*

*Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO.*

*Ant.* If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;  
And 'tis not wisdom, thus to second grief  
Against yourself.

*Leon.* I pray thee, cease thy counsel,  
Which falls into mine ears as profitless  
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;  
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,  
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.  
Bring me a father, that so lov'd his child,  
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,  
And bid him speak of patience;  
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine  
And let it answer every strain for strain;  
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,  
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:



If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard;  
 Cry—sorrow, wag! and hem, when he should groan;  
 Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk  
 With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,  
 And I of him will gather patience.

But there is no such man: For, brother, men  
 Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief  
 Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,  
 Their counsel turns to passion, which before  
 Would give preceptual medicine to rage,  
 Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,  
 Charm ach with air, and agony with words:  
 No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience  
 To those that wring under the load of sorrow;  
 But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,  
 To be so moral, when he shall endure  
 The like himself: therefore give me no counsel:  
 My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

*Ant.* Therein do men from children nothing differ.

*Leon.* I pray thee, peace: I will be flesh and blood,  
 For there was never yet philosopher,  
 That could endure the tooth-ach patiently;  
 However they have writ the style of gods,  
 And made a pish at chance and sufferance.

*Ant.* Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;  
 Make those, that do offend you, suffer too.

*Leon.* There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.  
 My soul doth tell me, Hero is belied;  
 And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince,  
 And all of them, that thus dishonour her.

*Enter Don PEDRO and CLAUDIO.*

*Ant.* Here comes the prince, and Claudio, hastily.



*D. Pedro.* Good den, good den.

*Claud.* Good day to both of you.

*Leon.* Hear you, my lords,—

*D. Pedro.* We have some haste, Leonato.

*Leon.* Some haste, my lord!—well, fare you well,  
my lord :—

Are you so hasty now?—well, all is one.

*D. Pedro.* Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old  
man.

*Ant.* If he could right himself with quarreling,  
Some of us would lie low.

*Claud.* Who wrongs him?

*Leon.* Marry,  
Thou, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou :—  
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword,  
I fear thee not.

*Claud.* Marry, beshrew my hand,  
If it should give your age such cause of fear :  
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

*Leon.* Tush, tush, man, never fleer and jest at me :  
I speak not like a dotard, nor a fool ;  
As, under privilege of age, to brag  
What I have done being young, or what would do,  
Were I not old : Know, Claudio, to thy head,  
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me,  
That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by ;  
And, with grey hairs, and bruise of many days,  
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.  
I say, thou hast belied mine innocent child ;  
Thy slander hath gone through and through **her heart**,  
And she lyes buried with her ancestors :  
O ! in a tomb where never scandal slept,  
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villainy.



*Claud.* My villainy! —

*Leon.* Thine, Claudio; thine I say.

*D. Pedro.* You say not right, old man.

*Leon.* My lord, my lord,  
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare;  
Despite his nice fence, and his active practice,  
His May of youth, and bloom of lustyhood.

*Claud.* Away, I will not have to do with you.

*Leon.* Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my  
child?

If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

*Ant.* He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:  
But that's no matter; let him kill one first;—  
Win me and wear me,—let him answer me,—  
Come, follow me, boy; come, boy, follow me:  
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;  
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

*Leon.* Brother,—

*Ant.* Content yourself: God knows, I lov'd my niece;  
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains;  
That dare as well answer a man, indeed,  
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue:  
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!—

*Leon.* Brother Antony—

*Ant.* Hold you content; What, man! I know them,  
yea,  
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple:  
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-mong'ring boys,  
That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,  
Go antickly, and show outward hideousness,  
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,  
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,  
And this is all.



*Leon.* But, brother Antony,—

*Ant.* Come, 'tis no matter ;  
Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

*D. Pedro.* Gentlemen both, we will not wake your  
patience.

My heart is sorry for your daughter's death ;  
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing  
But what was true, and very full of proof.

*Leon.* My lord, my lord,—

*D. Pedro.* I will not hear you.

*Leon.* No ?

Brother, away :—I will be heard ;—

*Ant.* — And shall,  
Or some of us will smart for it.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO and *ANT.*]

*Enter* BENEDICK.

*D. Pedro.* See, see ; here comes the man we went  
to seek.

*Claud.* Now, signior ! what news !

*Bene.* Good day, my lord.

*D. Pedro.* Welcome, signior : You are almost come  
to part almost a fray.

*Claud.* We had like to have had our two noses  
snapped off with two old men without teeth.

*D. Pedro.* Leonato and his brother : What think'st  
thou ? Had we fought, I doubt, we should have been  
too young for them.

*Bene.* In a false quarrel there is no true valour.  
I came to seek you both.

*Claud.* We have been up and down to seek thee,  
for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain  
have it beaten away : Wilt thou use thy wit ?



*Bene.* It is in my scabbard; Shall I draw it?

*D. Pedro.* Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

*Claud.* Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit.—I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.

*D. Pedro.* As I am an honest man, he looks pale:—Art thou sick, or angry?

*Claud.* What! courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

*Bene.* Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, and you charge it against me:—I pray you, choose another subject.

*Claud.* Nay, then give him another staff; this last was broke cross.

*D. Pedro.* By this light, he changes more and more; I think, he be angry indeed.

*Claud.* If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

*Bene.* Shall I speak a word in your ear?

*Claud.* God bless me from a challenge!

*Bene.* You are a villain;—I jest not:—I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare:—Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you: Let me hear from you.

*Claud.* Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

*D. Pedro.* What, a feast? a feast?

*Claud.* I'faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's-head and a capon; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say, my knife's naught.—Shall I not find a woodcock too?

*Bene.* Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily



*D. Pedro.* I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day: I said, thou hadst a fine wit; *True*, says she, *a fine little one*: No, said I, *a great wit*; *Right*, says she, *a great gross one*: Nay, said I, *a good wit*; *Just*, said she, *it hurts no body*: Nay, said I, *the gentleman is wise*; *Certain*, said she, *a wise gentleman*: Nay, said I, *he hath the tongues*; *That I believe*, said she, *for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues*. Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet, at last, she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

*Claud.* For the which she wept heartily, and said, she cared not.

*D. Pedro.* Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly: the old man's daughter told us all.

*Claud.* All, all; and moreover, *God saw him when he was hid in the garden*.

*D. Pedro.* But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

*Claud.* Yea, and text underneath, *Here dwells Benedick the married man*?

*Bene.* Fare you well, boy; you know my mind; I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not.—My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company: your brother, the bastard, is fled from Messina: you have, among you, killed a sweet and innocent lady: For my lord Lack-beard, there, he and I shall meet; and till then, peace be with him. [Exit BENEDICK.]



*D. Pedro.* He is in earnest.

*Claud.* In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

*D. Pedro.* And hath challenged thee?

*Claud.* Most sincerely.

*D. Pedro.* What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!

*Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and the Watch, with  
CONRADE and BORACHIO.*

*Claud.* He is then a giant to an ape: but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

*D. Pedro.* But, soft you, let be; pluck up, my heart, and be sad! Did he not say, my brother was fled?

*Dogb.* Come, you, sir; if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

*D. Pedro.* How now, two of my brother's men bound! Borachio, one!

*Claud.* Hearken after their offence, my lord!

*D. Pedro.* Officers, what offence have these men done?

*Dogb.* Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things: and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

*D. Pedro.* First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude what you lay to their charge.



*Claud.* Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

*D. Pedro.* Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: What's your offence?

*Bora.* Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer; do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night, overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death, than repeat over to my shame: the lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

*D. Pedro.* Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

*Claud.* I have drunk poison, whiles he utter'd it.

*D. Pedro.* But did my brother set thee on to this?

*Bora.* Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

*D. Pedro.* He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery:—

And fled he is upon this villainy.

*Claud.* Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear  
In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first.

*Dogb.* Come, bring away the plaintiffs; by this time our Sexton hath reformed signior Leonato of



the matter: And masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

*Verg.* Here, here comes master signior Leonato, and the Sexton too.

*Re-enter LEONATO and ANTONIO, with the Sexton.*

*Leon.* Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes; That when I note another man like him, I may avoid him: Which of these is he?

*Bora.* If you would know your wronger look on me.

*Leon.* Art thou the slave, that with thy breath hast kill'd Mine innocent child?

*Bora.* Yea, even I alone.

*Leon.* No, not so, villain; thou bely'st thyself; Here stand a pair of honourable men, A third is fled, that had a hand in it:— I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death; Record it with your high and worthy deeds; 'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

*Claud.* I know not how to pray your patience, Yet I must speak: Choose your revenge yourself; Impose me to what penance your invention Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not, But in mistaking.

*D. Pedro.* By my soul, nor I; And yet, to satisfy this good old man, I would bend under any heavy weight That he'll enjoin me to.

*Leon.* I cannot bid you bid my daughter live, That were impossible; but, I pray you both, Possess the people in Messina here How innocent she died: and, if your love



Can labour aught in sad invention,  
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,  
And sing it to her bones ; sing it to-night :—  
To-morrow morning come you to my house ;  
And since you could not be my son-in-law,  
Be yet my nephew : my brother hath a daughter,  
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,  
And she alone is heir to both of us ;  
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,  
And so dies my revenge.

*Claud.* O, noble sir,  
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me !  
I do embrace your offer ; and dispose  
For henceforth of poor Claudio.

*Leon.* To-morrow then I will expect your coming ;  
To-night I take my leave.—This naughty man  
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,  
Who, I believe, was pack'd in all this wrong,  
Hir'd to it by your brother.

*Bora.* No, by my soul, she was not ;  
Nor knew not what she did, when she spoke to me ;  
But always hath been just and virtuous,  
In any thing that I do know by her.

*Dogb.* Moreover, sir, (which, indeed, is not under  
white and black,) this plaintiff here, the offender, did  
call me ass : I beseech you, let it be remembered in  
his punishment : And also, the watch heard them  
talk of one Deformed : they say, he wears a key in his  
ear, and a lock hanging by it ; and borrows money in  
God's name ; the which he hath used so long, and  
never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and  
will lend nothing for God's sake : Pray you, examine  
him upon that point



*Leon.* I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

*Dogb.* Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth ; and I praise God for you.

*Leon.* There's for thy pains.

*Dogb.* God save the foundation !

*Leon.* Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

*Dogb.* I leave an arrant knave with your worship, which, I beseech your worship, to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship ; I wish your worship well ; God restore you to health : I humbly give you leave to depart ; and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it.—Come, neighbour. [*Exeunt DOGBERRY, VERGES, and Watch.*]

*Leon.* Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

*Ant.* Farewell, my lords ; we look for you to-morrow.

*D. Pedro.* We will not fail.

*Claud.* To-night I'll mourn with Hero  
[*Exeunt Don PEDRO and CLAUDIO.*]

*Leon.* Bring you these fellows on ; we'll talk with Margaret,

How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE II.—Leonato's garden.

*Enter BENEDICK and MARGARET, meeting.*

*Bene.* Pray thee, sweet mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

*Marg.* Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty ?



*Bene.* In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

*Marg.* To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep below stairs?

*Bene.* Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth, it catches.

*Marg.* And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

*Pene.* A most manly wit, Margaret, it will not hurt woman; and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice: I give hee the bucklers.

*Marg.* Give us the swords, we have bucklers of our own.

*Bene.* If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

*Marg.* Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who, I think, hath legs. [Exit MARGARET]

*Bene.* And therefore will come.

*The god of love,  
That sits above,  
And knows me, and knows me,  
How pitiful I deserve,—*

[Singing.]

I mean, in singing; but in loving,—Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of pandars, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road or a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self, in love: Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried; I can find out no rhyme to *lady* but *baby*, an innocent rhyme; for *scorn* *horn*, a hard rhyme; for *school*, *fool*, a babbling rhyme.



very ominous endings: No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.—

*Enter BEATRICE.*

Sweet Beatrice, would'st thou come when I called thee?

*Beat.* Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

*Bene.* O, stay but till then!

*Beat.* Then, is spoken; fare you well now:—and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for, which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

*Bene.* Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

*Beat.* Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

*Bene.* Thou hast frightened the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit: But, I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

*Beat.* For them all together; which maintained so politick a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

*Bene.* Suffer love; a good epithet! I do suffer love, indeed, for I love thee against my will.

*Beat.* In spite of your heart, I think; alas! poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.



*Bene.* Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

— *Beat.* It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty, that will praise himself.

*Bene.* An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. if a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument, than the bell rings, and the widow weeps.

*Beat.* And how long is that, think you?

*Bene.* Question?—Why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum: Therefore it is most expedient for the wise, (if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary,) to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself: So much for praising myself, (who, I myself will bear witness, is praise-worthy,) and now tell me, How doth your cousin?

*Beat.* Very ill.

*Bene.* And how do you?

*Beat.* Very ill too.

*Bene.* Serve God, love me, and mend: there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

*Enter* URSULA.

*Urs.* Madam, you must come to your uncle; yonder's old coil at home: it is proved, my lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

*Beat.* Will you go hear this news, signior?

*Bene.* I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and, moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt*



SCENE III.—*The inside of a church.*

*Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and Attendants, with musick and tapers.*

*Claud.* Is this the monument of Leonato?

*Atten.* It is, my lord.

*Claud.* [*Reads from a scroll.*]

*Done to death by slanderous tongues*

*Was the Hero that here lies:*

*Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,*

*Gives her fame which never dies:*

*So the life, that died with shame,*

*Lives in death with glorious fame.*

*Hang thou there upon the tomb,*

[*affixing it.*]

*Praising her when I am dumb.—*

Now, musick, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

SONG.

*Pardon, Goddess of the night,*

*Those that slew thy virgin knight;*

*For the which, with songs of woe,*

*Round about her tomb they go.*

*Midnight, assist our moan;*

*Help us to sigh and groan,*

*Heavily, heavily:*

*Graves, yawn, and yield your dead,*

*Till death be uttered,*

*Heavily, heavily.*

*Claudio.* Now, unto thy bones good night!

Yearly will I do this rite.

*D. Pedro.* Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:

The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,

Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about

Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey:

Thanks to you all, and leave us; fare you well.



*Claud.* Good-morrow, masters; each his several way.

*D. Pedro.* Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;

And then to Leonato's we will go.

*Claud.* And, Hymen, now with luckier issue speed's,  
Than this, for whom we render'd up this woe! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A room in Leonato's house.*

*Enter* LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE,  
URSULA, Friar, and HERO.

*Friar.* Did I not tell you she was innocent?

*Leon.* So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her,  
Upon the error that you heard debated:  
But Margaret was in some fault for this;  
Although against her will, as it appears  
In the true course of all the question.

*Ant.* Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

*Bene.* And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd  
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

*Leon.* Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,  
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves;  
And, when I send for you, come hither mask'd:  
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour  
To visit me:—You know your office, brother;  
You must be father to your brother's daughter,  
And give her to young Claudio. [*Exeunt ladies*]

*Ant.* Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

*Bene.* Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

*Friar.* To do what, signior?

*Bene.* To bind me, or undo me, one of them.—  
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,  
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.



*Leon.* That eye my daughter lent her ; 'Tis most true.

*Bene.* And I do with an eye of love requite her.

*Leon.* The sight whereof, I think, you had from me. From Claudio, and the prince ; But what's your will

*Bene.* Your answer, sir, is enigmatical :

But, for my will, my will is, your good will  
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd  
In the estate of honourable marriage ;—

In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

*Leon.* My heart is with your liking.

*Friar.* And my help.

Here comes the prince, and Claudio.

*Enter Don PEDRO and CLAUDIO, with Attendants.*

*D. Pedro.* Good morrow to this fair assembly.

*Leon.* Good morrow, prince ; good morrow, Claudio ;  
We here attend you ; Are you yet determin'd  
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter ?

*Claud.* I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.

*Leon.* Call her forth, brother, here's the friar ready  
[Exit ANTONIO.]

*D. Pedro.* Good morrow, Benedick : Why, what's  
the matter,

That you have such a February face,  
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness ?

*Claud.* I think, he thinks upon the savage bull :—  
Tush, fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,  
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee ;  
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,  
When he would play the noble beast in love.

*Bene.* Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low ;  
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,



And got a calf in that same noble feat,  
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

*Re-enter ANTONIO, with the Ladies masked.*

*Claud.* For this I owe you: here come other reckonings.

Which is the lady I must seize upon?

*Ant.* This same is she, and I do give you her.

*Claud.* Why, then she's mine: Sweet, let me see your face.

*Leon.* No, that you shall not, till you take her hand  
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

*Claud.* Give me your hand before this holy friar;  
I am your husband, if you like of me.

*Hero.* And when I liv'd, I was your other wife:

[*Unmasking*

And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

*Claud.* Another Hero?

*Hero.* Nothing certainer:

One Hero died defil'd; but I do live,

And, surely as I live, I am a maid.

*D. Pedro.* The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

*Leon.* She died, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.

*Friar.* All this amazement can I qualify;

When, after that the holy rites are ended,

I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:

Mean time, let wonder seem familiar,

And to the chapel let us presently.

*Bene.* Soft and fair, friar.—Which is Beatrice?

*Beat.* I answer to that name; [*Unmasking.*] What  
is your will?

*Bene.* Do not you love me?

*Beat.* No, no more than reason.



*Bene.* Why, then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio,  
Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

*Beat.* Do not you love me?

*Bene.* No, no more than reason.

*Beat.* Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula,  
Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear, you did.

*Bene.* They swore that you were almost sick for me.

*Beat.* They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

*Bene.* 'Tis no such matter:—Then, you do not love me?

*Beat.* No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

*Leon.* Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

*Claud.* And I'll be sworn upon't, that he loves her;  
For here's a paper, written in his hand,  
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,  
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

*Hero.* And here's another,  
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,  
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

*Bene.* A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts!—Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

*Beat.* I would not deny you;—but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and, partly, to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

*Bene.* Peace, I will stop your mouth.— [*Kissing her.*]

*D. Pedro.* How dost thou, Benedick the married man?

*Bene.* I'll tell thee what, prince; a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: Dost



thou think I care for a satire, or an epigram? No: if a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do propose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion.—For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

*Claud.* I had well hoped, thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

*Bene.* Come, come, we are friends:—let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wives' heels.

*Leon.* We'll have dancing afterwards.

*Bene.* First, o' my word; therefore, play, musick.—Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight And brought with armed men back to Messina.

*Bene.* Think not on him till to-morrow; I'll devise thee brave punishments for him.—Strike up, pipers.

[*Dance*

[*Exeunt.*

END OF VOL. II.



ANNOTATIONS

The first of these is the fact that the United States is a young nation, and that its history is a history of growth and development. The second is the fact that the United States is a nation of immigrants, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these immigrants.

The third is the fact that the United States is a nation of free men, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these free men. The fourth is the fact that the United States is a nation of law, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these laws.

The fifth is the fact that the United States is a nation of peace, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these peace-loving people. The sixth is the fact that the United States is a nation of progress, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these progressive people.

The seventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of justice, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these just people. The eighth is the fact that the United States is a nation of liberty, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these free people.

The ninth is the fact that the United States is a nation of unity, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these united people. The tenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of strength, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these strong people.

The eleventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of wisdom, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these wise people. The twelfth is the fact that the United States is a nation of courage, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these brave people.

The thirteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of hope, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these hopeful people. The fourteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of faith, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these faithful people.

The fifteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of love, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these loving people. The sixteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of truth, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the rights of these truthful people.



CHAPTER TWO. ABOUT NOTHING.

Now, I have a story, as an example. Not a  
very good one, but I shall tell you what it is.  
I was once in a room, and I was sitting at a  
table, and I was looking at a picture of a  
man, and I was thinking of him, and I was  
saying to myself, "I wish I could see him  
again, and I wish I could hear him speak."  
And then I was thinking of the picture, and  
I was saying to myself, "I wish I could see  
him again, and I wish I could hear him speak."

And then I was thinking of the picture, and  
I was saying to myself, "I wish I could see  
him again, and I wish I could hear him speak."

And then I was thinking of the picture, and  
I was saying to myself, "I wish I could see  
him again, and I wish I could hear him speak."

And then I was thinking of the picture, and  
I was saying to myself, "I wish I could see  
him again, and I wish I could hear him speak."

THE END.

Now, I have a story, as an example. Not a  
very good one, but I shall tell you what it is.

I was once in a room, and I was sitting at a  
table, and I was looking at a picture of a  
man, and I was thinking of him, and I was  
saying to myself, "I wish I could see him  
again, and I wish I could hear him speak."

THE END.



ANNOTATIONS  
ON  
THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

ACT I.

LINE 1. *Sir High,*] This was a title given to the inferior clergy.

Line 7. — *Custalorum.*] This is, I suppose, intended for a corruption of *Custos Rotulorum*. The mistake was hardly designed by the author, who, though he gives Shallow folly enough, makes him rather pedantic than illiterate. If we read :

Shal. *Ay, cousin Slender, and Custos Rotulorum,*  
It follows naturally :

Slen. *Ay, and Ratalorum too.*

JOHNSON.

Mr. Malone's opinion of this passage is, that Shakspeare here intended to ridicule the legal abbreviations of the times.

Line 48. — *speaks small like a woman.*] This is from the folio of 1623, and is the true reading. He admires her for the sweetness of her voice. But the expression is highly humourous, as making her *speaking small like a woman* one of her marks of distinction ; and the ambiguity of *small*, which signifies *little* as well as *low*, makes the expression still more pleasant.

WARBURTON



Line 125 —*coney-catching rascals*,—] A *coney catcher* was, in the time of Elizabeth, a common name for a cheat or sharper. Green, one of the first among us who made a trade of writing pamphlets, published *A Detection of the Frauds and Tricks of Coney-catchers and Couzeners*. JOHNSON.

Line 129. *You Banbury cheese!*] This is said in allusion to the thin carcase of Slender. The same thought occurs in *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, 1601—"You are like a Banbury cheese—nothing but paring." STEEVENS.

Line 341. —*let me see thee froth, and lime*:—] The Host calls for an immediate specimen of Bardolph's abilities as a tapster; and *frothing* beer and *liming* sack were tricks practised in the time of Shakspeare. The first was done by putting soap into the bottom of the tankard when they drew the beer; the other, by mixing *lime* with the sack (i. e. sherry) to make it sparkle in the glass. *Froth* and *live* is sense, but a little forced; and to make it so we must suppose the Host could guess by his dexterity in frothing a pot to make it appear fuller than it was, how he would afterwards succeed in the world. Falstaff himself complains of *limed* sack. STEEVENS.

Line 460. —*a Cain-colour'd beard*.] Cain and Judas, in the tapestries and pictures of old, were represented with *yellow* beards. THEOBALD.

## ACT II.

Line 110. —*curtail-dog*—] That is, a dog that misses his game. The tail is counted necessary to the agility of a grey-hound. JOHNSON.

Line 147. *I will not believe such a Cataian*,—] All the mystery of the term *Cataian*, for a liar, is only this. China was anciently called *Cataia* or *Cathay*, by the first adventurers that travelled thither; such as M. Paulo, and our Mandeville; who told such incredible wonders of this new discovered empire (in which they have not been outdone even



by the Jesuits themselves, who followed them), that a notorious liar was usually called a *Cataian*. WARBURTON.

Line 264. — *Pickt-hatch*,] A noted place for thieves and pick-pockets. THEOBALD.

*Pict-hatch* is frequently mentioned by contemporary writers. So in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*:

“From the Bordello it might come as well,

“The Spital, or *Pict-hatch*.”

STEEVENS.

Line 273. — *red lattice phrases*,] Your ale-house conversation.

JOHNSON.

*Red lattice* at the doors and windows, were formerly the external denotements of an ale-house. Hence the present *chequers*. So in *A fine Companion*, one of Shackerley Marmion's plays,—“A waterman's widow at the sign of the *red lattice* in Southwark.”

STEEVENS.

Line 382. — *up with your Fights*;] *Fights*, I find, are *cloaths* hung round the ship to conceal the men from the enemy; and *close-fights* are *bulkheads*, or any other shelter that the fabrick of a ship affords.

JOHNSON.

So in *The Christian turn'd Turk*, 1612—“lace the netting, “and let down the *fights*, make ready the shot, &c.

STEEVENS.

Line 547. — *wittol-cuckold*!] One who knows of his wife's infidelity, and tamely submits to it.

Line 648. — *cry'd game*, said I well?] We say, in colloquial language, that such a one is—*game*—or *game to the back*. *Cry'd game* might mean, in those days—a *profess'd back*, one who was as well known by the report of his gallantry as he could have been by proclamation.

STEEVENS.

Whether or not our author meant, or wrote, “*cry'd game*,” or “*cry'd aim*,” it is not in this case material; but it has served to show what the ingenuity of commentators will make of it. Dr. Warburton is for the reading *cry'd aim*, a term in archery. Many quotations might be adduced to prove both expressions common.



## ACT III.

Line 187. — *he writes verses, he speaks holy day, —*]. i. e. In a high-flown, fustian stile. It was called a *holy-day stile*, from the old custom of acting their farces of the *mysteries* and *moralities*, which were turgid and bombast, on holy-days. So in *Much Ado about Nothing* — “I cannot woo in festival terms.” And again, in *The Merchant of Venice* — “thou spend’st such *high-day* wit in praising him.” WARBURTON.  
See also *King Henry IV. Part 1.*

“With many holiday and lady terms.”

Line 189. — *’tis in his buttons;*] Alluding to an ancient custom among the country fellows, of trying whether they shall succeed with their mistresses, by carrying the *batchelor’s buttons* (a plant of the *Lychnis* kind, whose flowers resembled a coat button in form) in their pockets. And they judged of their good or bad success, by their growing or their not growing there. SMITH.

Greene mentions these *batchelor’s buttons*, in his *Quip for an upstart Courtier* — “I saw the *batchelor’s buttons*, whose virtue is, to make wanton maidens weep, when they have worne them forty weeks under their aprons,” &c.

STEEVENS.

Line 472. — *father’s wealth* —] Some light may be given to those who shall endeavour to calculate the increase of English wealth, by observing, that Latymer, in the time of Edward VI. mentions it as a proof of his father’s prosperity, *That though but a yeoman, he gave his daughters five pounds each for her portion.* At the latter end of Elizabeth, seven hundred pounds were such a temptation to courtship, as made all other motives suspected. Congreve makes twelve thousand pounds more than a counterbalance to the affection of Belinda. No poet would now fly his favourite character at less than fifty thousand. JOHNSON.

Line 506. — *come cut and long tail,* —] According to



the forest laws, the dog of a man, who had no right to the privilege of chace, was obliged to cut or *law* his dog, amongst other modes of disabling him, by depriving him of his tail. A dog so cut was called a *cut*, or *cur-tail*, and by contraction *cur*. *Cut and long-tail* therefore signify the dog of a clown, and the dog of a gentleman. STEEVENS.

Line 731. — *I'll be horn-mad.*] There is no image which our author appears so fond of as that of cuckold's horns. Scarcely a light character is introduced that does not endeavour to produce merriment by some allusion to horned husbands. As he wrote his plays for the stage rather than the press, he perhaps reviewed them seldom, and did not observe this repetition, or finding the jest, however frequent, still successful, did not think correction necessary.

JOHNSON

ACT IV.

Line 1. This is a very trifling scene, of no use to the plot, and I should think of no great delight to the audience; but Shakspeare best knew what would please. JOHNSON.

Sir William Blackstone, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Malone, and Mr. Reed, have endeavoured to illustrate this scene of ribaldry; but, I think, quite in vain.

Line 103. — *he so takes on*—] *To take on*, which is now used for *to grieve*, seems to be used by our author for *to rage*. Perhaps it was applied to any passion. JOHNSON.

Line 107. — *peer-out*,] That is, *appear horns*. Shakspeare is at his old lures. JOHNSON.

Line 247. — *his wife's leman*.] *i. e.* Sweetheart.

Line 278. — *I spy a great peard under her muffler*.] As the second stratagem, by which Falstaff escapes, is much the grosser of the two, I wish it had been practised first. It is very unlikely that Ford, having been so deceived before,



and knowing that he had been deceived, would suffer him to escape in so slight a disguise. JOHNSON.

Line 281. — *cry out thus upon no trail,*] The expression is taken from the hunters. *Trail* is the scent left by the passage of the game. *To cry out*, is to open or bark. JOHNSON.

Line 320. — *they must come off;*] *To come off*, signifies in our author, sometimes *to be uttered with spirit and volubility*. In this place it seems to mean what is in our time expressed by *to come down*, to pay liberally and readily. These accidental and colloquial senses are the disgrace of language, and the plague of commentators. JOHNSON.

*To come off*, is to pay. In this sense it is used by Massinger, in *The Unnatural Combat*, Act. 4. Sc. 2. where a wench, demanding money of the father to keep his bastard, says—*Will you come off, Sir?* STEEVENS.

The phrase is used by Chaucer, *Friar's Tale*, 338. edit Urry.

“ *Come off*, and let me riden hastily,

“ Give me twelve pence ; I may no longer tarie.”

TYRWHITT.

Line 328. *I rather will suspect the sun with cold,*] Thus the modern editions.—The old ones read—with *gold*, which may mean, I rather will suspect the sun can be corrupted by a bribe, than thy honour be betrayed to wantonness. Surely Shakspeare would rather have said—*suspect the sun of cold*—if he had designed what is implied by the alteration.

STEEVENS.

Line 358. — *and takes the cattle;*] *To take*, in Shakspeare, signifies to seize or strike with a disease, to blast.

So in *Lear*:

“ —Strike her young bones,

“ Ye taking airs, with lameness.”

JOHNSON.

Line 363. — *idle-headed Eld*—] *Eld* here means old.

— 380. — *urchins, ouphes,*—] *i. e.* Fairies



Line 385. *With some diffused song ;]* i. e. Wild, unconnected, irregular.

A *diffused song* signifies a song that strikes out into wild sentiments beyond the bounds of nature, such as those whose subject is fairy land. WARBURTON.

By *diffused song* Shakspeare may mean such songs as mad people sing. Edgar in *K. Lear*, when he has determined to assume the appearance of a travelling lunatic, declares his resolution to *diffuse his speech*, i. e. to give it the turn peculiar to madness. STEEVENS.

Line 388. *And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight ;]* This should perhaps be written *to-pinch*, as one word. This use of *to* in composition with verbs is very common in Gower and Chaucer, but must have been rather antiquated in the time of Shakspeare. See Gower *De Confessione Amantis*, B. 4. fol. 7.

“ All *to-tore* is myn araie.”

And Chaucer, *Reeve's Tale*, 1169.

“ ————mouth and nose *to-broke*.”

The construction will otherwise be very hard. TYRWHITT.

Line 408. *That silk will I go buy ;—and in that time]* Mr. Theobald referring *that time* to the time of buying the silk, alters it to *tire*. But there is no need of any change : *that time* evidently relating to the time of the mask with which Falstaff was to be entertained, and which makes the whole subject of this dialogue. Therefore the common reading is right. WARBURTON.

Line 416. —*tricking for our fairies.*] To trick is to decorate.

Line 435. —*standing-bed and truckle-bed ;]* The usual furniture in chambers in that time was a standing-bed, under which was a *trochle*, *truckle*, or *running bed*. In the standing-bed lay the master, and in the truckle-bed the servant. So in Hall's *Account of a Servile Tutor* :



“ He lieth in the *truckle-bed*,

“ While his young master lieth o’er his head.”

JOHNSON.

Line 448. ———*Bohemian-Tartar*———] The French call a *Bohemian* what we call a *Gypsy*; but I believe the Host means nothing more than, by a wild appellation, to insinuate that Simple makes a strange appearance. JOHNSON.

Line 456. ———*muscle-shell* ;] He calls poor Simple *muscle-shell*, because he stands with his mouth open. JOHNSON.

Line 489. ———*but was paid for my learning.*] To *pay*, here means to beat.

Line 531. ———*Primero*.———] A game at cards. JOHNSON

Line 548. ———*action of an old woman*,———] What! was it any dexterity of wit in Sir John Falstaff to counterfeit the action of an *old woman*, in order to escape being apprehended for a *witch*? Surely, one would imagine, this was the readiest means to bring him into such a scrape: for none but *old women* have ever been suspected of being *witches*.

THEOBALD.

Falstaff, by counterfeiting such weakness and infirmity as would naturally be pitied in an old woman, averted the punishment to which he would otherwise have been subjected, on the supposition that he was a witch. STEEVENS.

Line 556. *Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, &c.*] The great fault of this play is the frequency of expression so profane, that no necessity of preserving character can justify them. There are laws of higher authority than those of criticism. JOHNSON.

Line 575. ———*image*———] *i. e.* Representation.

——— 599. ———*quaint in green*,———] *i. e.* Whimsically dressed in green.



ACT V.

Line 105. — *fellow of this walk,*] Who the *fellow* is, or why he keeps his shoulders for him, I do not understand.

JOHNSON.

To the keeper the *shoulders* and *humbles* belong as a perquisite.

GREY.

Line 119. *You ORPHAN-heirs of fixed destiny,*] But why *orphan-heirs*? Destiny, whom they succeeded, was yet in being. Doubtless the poet wrote,

*You OUPHEN heirs of fixed destiny,*

*i. e.* you *elves*, who minister, and succeed in some of the works of destiny. They are called, in this play, both before and afterwards, *ouphe*s; here *ouphen*; *en* being the plural termination of Saxon nouns.

WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton corrects *orphan* and *ouphen*; and not without plausibility, as the word *ouphe*s occurs both before and afterward. But, I fancy, in acquiescence to the vulgar doctrine, the address in this line is to a part of the *troop*, as mortals by birth, but adopted by the fairies: *orphans* in respect of their real parents, and now only dependent on *destiny* herself.

FARMER.

Line 131. — *Go you, and where you find a maid,*—

*Raise up the organs of her fantasy;*] The sense of this speech is—that she, who had performed her religious duties, should be secure against the illusion of fancy; and have her sleep, like that of infancy, undisturbed by disordered dreams. This was then the popular opinion, that evil spirits had a power over the fancy; and, by that means, could inspire wicked dreams into those who, on their going to sleep, had not recommended themselves to the protection of heaven. So Shakspeare makes one, on his lying down, say,



*From fairies, and the tempters of the night,  
Protect us, heaven!*

WARBURTON.

Line 143. *In state as wholesome,*] *Wholsome* here signifies *integer*. He wishes the castle may stand in its present state of perfection, which the following words plainly shew.

————— *as in state 'tis fit*

WARBURTON.

Line 144. *Worthy the owner, AND the owner it.]* *And* cannot be the true reading. The context will not allow it; and his court to queen Elizabeth directs us to another,

————— *AS the owner it.*

For, sure he had more address than to content himself with wishing a thing *to be*, which his complaisance must suppose actually *was*, namely, the worth of the owner. WARBURTON.

Line 154. *In emerald-tufts, flowers, PURPLE, blue and white;  
Like saphire, pearl, AND rich embroidery,]*

The lines were wrote thus by the poet:

*In emerald-tuffs, flowers PURPLED, blue, and white;*

*Like saphire, pearl, IN rich embroidery,*

*i. e.* Let there be blue and white flowers *worked* on the green-sward, like saphire and pearl *in* rich embroidery. To *purfle*, is to over-lay with tinsel, gold thread, &c.; so our ancestors called a certain lace of this kind of work a *purfling-lace*.

WARBURTON

Line 157. ——— *character.*] For the matter with which they make letters.

JOHNSON.

Line 165. ——— *of middle earth.*] Spirits are supposed to inhabit the ethereal regions, and fairies to dwell underground; men therefore are in a middle station. JOHNSON.

Line 170. *With trial-fire, &c.]* So Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The Faithful Shepherdess*:

“In this flame his finger thrust,

“Which will burn him if he lust;

“But if not, away will turn,

“As loth unspotted flesh to burn. STEEVENS.



Line 180. Evans. *It is right, indeed, &c.*] This short speech, which is very much in character for Sir Hugh, I have inserted from the old quartos. THEOBALD.

Line 183. —and luxury] *Luxury* here means, enslaved to pleasure.

Line 184. *Lust is but a bloody fire,*] A *bloody fire* means a fire in the blood. In *The Second Part of Henry IV.* Act. 4. the same expression occurs:

“Led on by *bloody youth*,” &c. —

i. e. sanguine youth. STEEVENS.

Line 199. *See you these, husband? do not these fair yokes*

*Become the forest better than the town?*] Mrs. Page's meaning is this. She speaks to her own, and Mrs. Ford's husband, and asks them, if they see the horns in Falstaff's hand; and then, alluding to them as the types of *cuckoldom*, puts the question, whether those *yokes* are not more proper in the *forest* than in the *town*, i. e. than in their families, as a reproach to them? THEOBALD.

Line 219. —how wit may be made a *Jack-a-Lent*,] A *Jack a Lent* appears to have been some puppet which was thrown at in Lent, like Shrove-tide cocks.

So in Ben Jonson's *Tale of a Tub*:

“——on an Ash-Wednesday,

“Where thou didst stand six weeks the *Jack o'Lent*,

“For boys to hurl three-penny throws at thee.”

STEEVENS.

Line 256. —*ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me:—*]

Though this be perhaps not unintelligible, yet it is an odd way of confessing his dejection. I should wish to read:

——*ignorance itself* has a plume o'me;

That is, I am so depressed, that *ignorance itself* plucks me, and decks itself with the spoils of my weakness. Of the present reading, which is probably right, the meaning may be, I am so enfeebled, that *ignorance itself* weighs me down and oppresses me.

JOHNSON.



Line 263. Mrs. Ford. *Nay, husband,—*] This and the following little speech I have inserted from the old quartos. The retrenchment, I presume, was by the players. Sir John Falstaff is sufficiently punished, in being disappointed and exposed. The expectation of his being prosecuted for the twenty pounds, gives the conclusion too tragical a turn. Besides, it is *poetical justice* that Ford should sustain this loss, as a fine for his unreasonable jealousy. THEOBALD.

Line 269. *—laugh at my wife,—*] The two plots are excellently connected, and the transition very artfully made in this speech. JOHNSON.

Line 321. *—amaze—*] *i. e.* Confuse with terror.

*— 337. Page. Well, what remedy?—*] In the first sketch of this play, which, as Mr. Pope observes, is much inferior to the latter performance, the only sentiment of which I regret the omission occurs at this critical time, when Fenton brings in his wife, there is this dialogue.

Mrs. Ford, *Come, mistress Page, I must be bold with you,  
'Tis pity to part love that is so true.*

Mrs. Page. [Aside.] *Although that I have miss'd in my  
intent,*

*Yet I am glad my husband's match is cross'd.*

*—Here Fenton, take her.—*

Eva. *Come, master Page, you must needs agree,*

Ford. *I faith, Sir, come, you see your wife is pleas'd.*

Page. *I cannot tell, and yet my heart is eas'd:*

*And yet it doth me good the Doctor miss'd.*

*Come hither, Fenton, and come hither, daughter.* JOHNSON.

END OF THE ANNOTATIONS ON THE MERRY WIVES OF  
WINDSOR.



ANNOTATIONS  
ON  
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

ACT I.

LINE 5. *Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,  
Long withering out a young man's revenue.*] Dr. Warburton would read, *wintering* on a young man's revenue, which is no improvement to the sense.

Line 82. ——— *the rose distill'd.*] This is one of our Author's favourite images, it is frequently to be met with in his sonnets.

Line 118. ——— spotted ———] As *spotless* is innocent, so *spotted* is wicked. JOHNSON.

Line 146. ——— *too high to be enthrall'd to low!*] Love possesses all the editions, but carries no just meaning in it. Nor was Hermia displeas'd at being in love; but regrets the inconveniences that generally attend the passion: either, the parties are disproportioned, in degree of blood and quality; or unequal, in respect of years; or brought together by the appointment of friends, and not by their own choice. These are the complaints represented by Lysander; and Hermia, to answer to the first, as she has done to the other two, must necessarily say;

*O cross!—too high to be enthrall'd to low!*  
So the antithesis is kept up in the terms; and so she is



made to condole the disproportion of blood and quality in lovers. THEOBALD.

Line 155. *Brief as the lightning in the collied night,* *Collied*, i. e. black, smutted with coal, a word still used in the midland counties. STEEVENS.

Line 196. *Your eyes are lode-stars.*] This was a compliment not unfrequent among the old poets. The *lode-star* is the leading or guiding *star*, that is, the *pole-star*. The *magnet* is, for the same reason, called the *lode-stone*, either because it leads iron, or because it guides the sailor.

Davies calls queen Elizabeth, *lode-stone* to hearts, and *lode-stone* to all eyes. JOHNSON.

Line 320. ——— *as small, &c.*] This passage shews how the want of women on the old stage was supplied. If they had not a young man who could perform the part with a face that might pass for feminine, the character was acted in a mask, which was at that time a part of a lady's dress so much in use that it did not give any unusual appearance to the scene: and he that could modulate his voice in a female tone might play the woman very successfully. It is observed in Downes's *Memoirs of the Playhouse*, that one of these counterfeit heroines moved the passions more strongly than the women that have since been brought upon the stage. Some of the catastrophes of the old comedies, which make lovers marry the wrong women, are, by recollection of the common use of masks, brought nearer to probability.

JOHNSON.

Line 380. *At the duke's oak we meet.*

——— *hold, or cut bow-strings.*] This proverbial phrase came originally from the camp. When a rendezvous was appointed, the militia soldiers would frequently make excuse for not keeping their word, that their *bowstrings* were *broke*, i. e. their arms unserviceable. Hence when one would give another absolute assurance of meeting



him, he would say proverbially——*hold or cut bowstrings*——*i. e.* whether the *bow-string* held or broke. For *cut* is used as a neuter, like the verb *frets*. As when we say, the *string frets*, the *silk frets*, for the passive, *it is cut or fretted*.

WARBURTON.

ACT II.

Line 16. ——*lob of spirits.*] *Lob, lubber, looby, lobcock*, all denote both inactivity of body and dulness of mind.

JOHNSON.

Line 23. ——*changeling:*] *Changeling* is commonly used for the child supposed to be left by the fairies, but here for the child taken away.

JOHNSON.

Line 29. ——*sheen.*] *Shining, bright, gay.*

JOHNSON.

—— 30. *But they do square.*] To *square* here is to quarrel.

JOHNSON.

Line 101. *The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud,*] Is a country game played by the labourers in the fields and farm-yards; it is performed on the turf, from which certain parts are cut out, and played with nine stones, each man, which are moved like chess-men.

Line 177. *And maidens call it love in idleness.*] This is as fine a metamorphosis as any in Ovid: With a much better moral, intimating that irregular love has only power when people are idle, or not well employed.

WARBURTON.

Line 196. ——*I am invisible.*] I thought proper here to observe, that, as Oberon and Puck his attendant, may be frequently observed to speak, when there is no mention of entering; they are designed by the poet to be upon the stage during the greatest part of the remainder of the play; and to mix, as they please, as spirits, with the other actors; and embroil the plot, by their interposition, without being seen or heard, but when to their own purpose.

THEOBALD



Line 202. ——— and wood within this wood,] *Wood, or mad, wild, raving.* POPE.

“The name *woden*,” says Verstegan in his *Antiquities*, “signifies fierce or furious, and in like sense we still retain it, saying, when one is in a great rage, that he is *wood*, or taketh on, as if he were *wood*.” STEEVENS.

Line 283. ——— a roundel, and a fairy song ;] *A roundel is a dance in a ring.* GREY.

*A roundel, rondill, or roundelay, is used to signify a song beginning or ending with the same sentence, redit in orbem* STEEVENS.

Line 328. *Love takes the meaning in love's conference,*] In the conversation of those who are assured of each other's kindness, not suspicion, but *love takes the meaning*. No malevolent interpretation is to be made, but all is to be received in the sense which *love* can find, and which *love* can dictate. JOHNSON.

Line 407. *Reason becomes the marshal to my will,*] That is, My will now follows reason. JOHNSON.

Line 440. *And you ———*] Instead of *you*, the first folio reads *yet*. Mr. Pope first gave the right word from the quarto, 1600. STEEVENS.

### ACT III.

Line 1. In the time of Shakspeare, there were many companies of players, sometimes five at the same time, contending for the favour of the publick. Of these some were undoubtedly very unskilful and very poor, and it is probable that the design of this scene was to ridicule their ignorance, and the odd expedients to which they might be driven by the want of proper decorations. Bottom was perhaps the head of a rival house, and is therefore honoured with an ass's head. JOHNSON.



Line 117. *O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?* It is plain by Bottom's answer, that Snout mentioned an *ass's head*. Therefore we should read,

Snout. *O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee? An ass's head?* JOHNSON.

Line 177. ——— *the fiery glow-worm's eyes,*] I know not how Shakspeare, who commonly derived his knowledge of nature from his own observation, happened to place the glow-worm's light in his eyes, which is only in his tail.

JOHNSON.

Line 220. ——— *patches,*] *Patch* was in old language used as a term of opprobry; perhaps with much the same import as we use *raggamuffin*, or *tatterdemalion*. JOHNSON.

Line 236. *And at our stamp,*] This seems to be a vicious reading. Fairies are never represented stamping, or of a size that should give force to a stamp, nor could they have distinguished the stamps of Puck from those of their own companions. I read,

*And at a stump here o'er and o'er one falls.* JOHNSON

Line 242. *Some, sleeves; some, hats:]* There is the like image in Drayton, of queen Mab and her fairies flying from Hobgoblin.

*Some to a ruff, and some a gown,*

*'Gainst one another justling;*

*They flew about like chaff i' th' wind,*

*For haste some left their masks behind,*

*Some could not stay their gloves to find,*

*There never was such bustling.* JOHNSON.

Line 286. ——— *O brave touch!]* *Touch* in Shakspeare's time was the same with our *exploit*, or rather *stroke*. A *brave touch*, a noble *stroke*, *un grand coup*. *Mason* was very merry, pleasantly playing both with the shrewd touches of many curst boys, and the small discretion of many lewd schoolmasters. Ascham. JOHNSON.



Line 348. *Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?*] Alluding to the ancient practice of having the family crest affixed in *badges* on the servants' sleeves.

Line 375. ——— *join, in souls,*] i. e. Join *heartily*, unite in the same mind. Shakspeare, in *Henry V.* uses an expression not unlike this:

*For we will hear, note, and believe in heart;*  
i. e. heartily believe: and in *Measure for Measure*, he talks of electing with *special soul*. STEEVENS.

Line 417. ——— *all yon fiery Oes.*] I would willingly believe that the poet wrote *fiery orbs*. JOHNSON.

Shakspeare uses *O* for a circle. So in the prologue to *Henry V.*

————— “ can we crowd  
“ Within this little *O*, the very casques  
“ That did affright the air at Agincourt?”  
STEEVENS.

Line 524. ——— *you canker-blossom!*] The *canker-blossom* is not in this place the blossom of the *canker* or wild rose, which our author alludes to in *Much Ado about Nothing*, act 1, scene 6.

“ I had rather be a *canker* in a hedge  
“ than a rose in his grace.”  
but a worm that preys on the leaves or buds of flowers, always beginning in the middle. So in the famous passage,

————— “ like a worm i' th' bud,  
“ Feed on her damask cheek.” STEEVENS.

Line 579. ——— *of hindring knot-grass made;*] It appears that *knot-grass* was anciently supposed to prevent the growth of any animal or child.

Thus in *The Coxcomb*:  
“ We want a boy extremely for this function, kept under,  
“ for a year, with milk and *knot-grass*.” Daisy roots were supposed to have the same effect. STEEVENS.



Line 606. ——— *so did sort,*] *So happen* in the issue.

JOHNSON.

Line 638. ——— *damned spirits all,*

*That in cross-ways and floods have burial,*] The ghosts of self-murderers, who are buried in cross-roads; and of those who being drowned, were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rites of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies.

STEEVENS.

Line 645. *I with the morning's love have oft made sport ;*] Thus all the old copies, and I think, rightly. Tithonus was the husband of Aurora, and Tithonus was no young Deity. How such a waggish spirit as the King of the Fairies might make sport with an antiquated lover may be easily understood. Dr. Johnson reads with all the modern editors, "*I with the morning light,*" &c.

STEEVENS.

Line 729. *Jack shall have Jill, &c.*] These three last lines are to be found among Heywood's Epigrams on three hundred Proverbs.

STEEVENS.

#### ACT IV.

Line 1. I see no reason why the fourth act should begin here, when there seems no interruption of the action. In the old quartos of 1600, there is no division of acts, which seems to have been afterwards arbitrarily made in the first folio, and may therefore be altered at pleasure. JOHNSON.

Line 25. ——— *Cavelero Cobweb.*] Without doubt it should be *Cavelero Pease-blossom*; as for *Cavalero Cobweb*, he had just been dispatched upon a perilous adventure. GREY.

Line 32. ——— *the tongs* ———] Alludes to the old country music, of *The Tongs and the Key*.



Line 48. *So doth the woodbine, the sweet honey-suckle,  
Gently entwist,—the female ivy so  
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.]* What Shakspeare seems to mean, is this—*So the woodbine, i. e. the sweet honey-suckle, doth gently entwist the barky fingers of the elm, and so does the female ivy enring the same fingers.* It is not unfrequent in the Poets, as well as other writers, to explain one word by another which is better known. The reason why Shakspeare thought *woodbine* wanted explanation, perhaps is this. In some countries, by *woodbine* or *woodbind* would be generally understood the *Ivy*, which he had occasion to mention in the very next line. STEEVENS.

Line 49. ——— *the female ivy:]* Shakspeare calls it *female ivy*, because it always requires some support, which is poetically called its husband. So Milton:

“ led the vine

“ To wed her elm: she spous’d, about him twines

“ Her marriageable arms ———”

STEEVENS.

Line 115. ——— *our observation is perform’d:]* The honours due to the morning of *May*. I know not why Shakspeare calls this play *A Midsummer-Night’s Dream*, when he so carefully informs us that it happened on the night preceding *May-day*. JOHNSON.

Dr. Farmer has justly observed, that this play no more denotes the real time of action, than that of *The Winter’s Tale*, which was sheep-shearing time. The title of *Twelfth-Night*, as well as these two plays just quoted, were doubtless suggested by some temporary or theatrical custom.

Line 131. *So flew’d,] i. e. So mouth’d.* *Flews* are the large chaps of a deep-mouthed hound. HANMAR.

Line 131. *So sanded ;] So marked with small spots.*

JOHNSON.

*Sandy’d* means of a sandy-colour, which is one of the true denotements of a blood-hound. STEEVENS.



Line 143. *I wonder of ——*] *i. e.* I wonder at, this was old phraseology.

Line 179. *Fair Helena in fancy following me.*] *Fancy* is here taken for *love* or *affection*, and is opposed to *fury*, as before.

*Sighs and tears, poor fancy's followers.*

Some now call that which a man takes particular delight in, his *fancy*. JOHNSON.

Line 252. —— a thing of nought.] Which Mr. Theobald changes with great pomp to a *thing of naught*, is, a good for nothing thing. JOHNSON.

Line 256. —— made men.] In the same sense as in *The Tempest*,—any monster in England makes a man.

JOHNSON.

Line 274. —— good strings to your beards,] *Strings*, to prevent the false beards from falling off.

## ACT V.

Line 4. These beautiful lines are in all the old editions thrown out of metre. They are very well restored by the late editors. JOHNSON.

Line 45. *Say, what abridgment, &c.*] By *abridgment*, our author means dramatick performance, which crowds the events of years into as many hours. So in *Hamlet*, act 2, scene 7, he calls the players *abridgments, abstracts, and brief chronicles of the times*. STEEVENS.

Line 52. *Thee reads.*] This is printed as Mr. Theobald gave it from both the old quartos. In the first folio, and all the following editions, *Lysander* reads the catalogue, and *Theseus* makes the remarks. JOHNSON.

Line 88. *Unless you can find sport in their intents.*] Thus



all the copies. But as I know not what it is to *stretch* and *con* an *intent*, I suspect a line to be lost. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's remark is doubtless just, as to the commentaries he had already witnessed; but what would he now say to the gigantic pile of elucidations with which the various editors have of late favoured the public!

Line 102. *Our sport shall be, &c.*] Voltaire says something like this of Louis XIV. who took a pleasure in seeing his courtiers in confusion when they spoke to him.

STEEVENS.

Line 103. *And what poor duty cannot do,  
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.*] The sense of this passage, as it now stands, is this: *What the inability of duty cannot perform, regardful generosity receives as an act of ability, though not of merit.* The contrary is rather true: *What dutifulness tries to perform without ability, regardful generosity receives as having the merit, though not the power, of complete performance.* JOHNSON.

Line 161. *Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,*] Mr. Upton rightly observes, that Shakspeare in this line ridicules the affectation of beginning many words with the same letter. He might have remarked the same of

*The raging rocks*

*And shivering shocks.*

Gascoigne, contemporary with our poet, remarks and blames the same affectation. JOHNSON.

Line 219. *And like Limander, &c.*] Limander and Helen, are spoken by the blundering player, for Leander and Hero. Shafalus and Procrus, for Cephalus and Procris.

JOHNSON.

Line 280 ——— *in snuff.*] An equivocation *Snuff* signifies both the cinder of a candle, and hasty anger.

JOHNSON.

Line 319. ——— *cut thread and thrum;*] *Thrum* is the



end or extremity of a weaver's warp; it is popularly used for very coarse yarn. The maids now call a mop of yarn a *thrum mob*.  
WARNER.

Line 347. ——— and prove an ass.] The character of Theseus in this play is more exalted in his humanity, than his greatness. Though some sensible observations on life, and animated descriptions fall from him, as it is said of Jago, *you shall taste him more as a soldier than as a wit*, which is a distinction he is here striving to deserve, though with little success; as in support of his pretensions he never rises higher than a *pun*, and frequently sinks as low as a *quibble*.

STEEVENS.

Line 365. *These lily brows,*  
*This cherry nose.*] In the old copies, *These lily lips, this cherry nose*. All Thisby's lamentation, till now, runs in regular rhyme and metre. But both, by some accident, are in this single instance interrupted. I suspect the poet wrote;

*These lily brows,*  
*This cherry nose.*

Now black brows being a beauty, *lily brows* are as ridiculous as a *cherry nose*, *green eyes*, or *cowslip cheeks*.

THEOBALD.

Line 407. *And the wolf behowls the moon;*] In the old copies, *And the wolf beholds the moon*. As 'tis the design of these lines to characterize the animals, as they present themselves at the hour of midnight; and as the wolf is not justly characterized by saying he *beholds* the moon, which other beasts of prey, then awake, do: and as the sounds these animals make at that season, seem also intended to be represented; I make no question but the poet wrote;

*And the wolf behowls the moon.*

For so the wolf is exactly characterized, it being his peculiar property to *howl at the moon*. (*Behowl*, as *bemoan*, *beseem*, and an hundred others.)  
WARBURTON.



Line 437. *Now, until, &c.*] This speech, which both the old quartos give to Oberon, is in the edition of 1623, and in all the following printed as the song. I have restored it to Oberon, as it apparently contains not the blessing which he intends to bestow on the bed, but his declaration that he will bless it, and his orders to the fairies how to perform the necessary rites. But where then is the song? I am afraid it is gone after many other things of greater value. The truth is, that two songs are lost. The series of the scene is this; after the speech of Puck, Oberon enters, and calls the fairies to a song, which song is apparently wanting in all the copies. Next Titania leads another song, which is indeed lost like the former, though the editors have endeavoured to find it. Then Oberon dismisses his fairies to the dispatch of the ceremonies.

The songs, I suppose, were lost, because they were not inserted in the players parts, from which the drama was printed.

JOHNSON

END OF THE ANNOTATIONS ON A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S  
DREAM.



## ANNOTATIONS

ON

## TWELFTH - NIGHT:

OR,

## WHAT YOU WILL.

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Line 21. —conclusions to be as kisses, if your four negatives make your two affirmatives,] Though I do not discover much ratiocination in the Clown's discourse, yet, methinks, I can find some glimpse of a meaning in his observation, that *the conclusion is as kisses*. For, says he, *if four negatives make two affirmatives, the conclusion is as kisses*: that is, the conclusion follows by the conjunction of two negatives, which, by *kissing* an embracing, coalesce into one, and make an affirmative. What the *four negatives* are I do not know. I read, *So that conclusions be as kisses*. JOHNSON.

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Line 55. —scathful —] i. e. *Mischievous*.

— 63. —desperate of shame, and state,] Inattentive to his character or his condition, like a desperate man.

JOHNSON.

Line 113. —as fat and fulsome—] We should read, *as flat*.

WARBURTON.



Line 437. *Now, until, &c.*] This speech, which both the old quartos give to Oberon, is in the edition of 1623, and in all the following printed as the song. I have restored it to Oberon, as it apparently contains not the blessing which he intends to bestow on the bed, but his declaration that he will bless it, and his orders to the fairies how to perform the necessary rites. But where then is the song? I am afraid it is gone after many other things of greater value. The truth is, that two songs are lost. The series of the scene is this; after the speech of Puck, Oberon enters, and calls the fairies to a song, which song is apparently wanting in all the copies. Next Titania leads another song, which is indeed lost like the former, though the editors have endeavoured to find it. Then Oberon dismisses his fairies to the dispatch of the ceremonies.

The songs, I suppose, were lost, because they were not inserted in the players parts, from which the drama was printed.

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END OF THE ANNOTATIONS ON A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S  
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Line 21. —conclusions to be as kisses, if your four negatives make your two affirmatives,] Though I do not discover much ratiocination in the Clown's discourse, yet, methinks, I can find some glimpse of a meaning in his observation, that *the conclusion is as kisses*. For, says he, *if four negatives make two affirmatives, the conclusion is as kisses*: that is, the conclusion follows by the conjunction of two negatives, which, by *kissing* an embracing, coalesce into one, and make an affirmative. What the *four negatives* are I do not know. I read, *So that conclusions be as kisses*. JOHNSON.

Line 38. —or the bells of St. Bennet, Sir, may put you in mind,] When in this play he mentioned the *bed of Ware*, he recollected that the scene was in *Illyria*, and added in *England*; but his sense of the same impropriety could not restrain him from the bells of St. Bennet. JOHNSON

Line 55. —scathful —] i. e. *Mischievous*.

— 63. —desperate of shame, and state,] Inattentive to his character or his condition, like a desperate man.

JOHNSON.

Line 113. —as fat and fulsome—] We should read, *as flat*.

WARBURTON.



*Fat* means *dull*; so we say a *fatheaded* fellow; *fat* likewise means *gross*, and is sometimes used for *obscene*. JOHNSON.

Line 123. *Why should I not, had I the heart to do it,  
Like to the Egyptian thief, at point of death*

*Kill what I love:]* In this *simile*, a particular story is presupposed; which ought to be known to shew the justness and propriety of the comparison. It is taken from *Heliodorus's Æthiopics*, to which our author was indebted for the allusion. This *Egyptian thief* was *Thyamis*, who was a native of *Memphis*, and at the head of a band of robbers. *Theagenes* and *Chariclea* falling into their hands, *Thyamis* fell desperately in love with the lady, and would have married her. Soon after, a stronger body of robbers coming down upon *Thyamis's* party, he was in such fears for his mistress, that he had her shut into a cave with his treasure. It was customary with those barbarians, *when they despaired of their own safety, first to make away with those whom they held dear*, and desired for companions in the next life. *Thyamis*, therefore, benetted round with his enemies, raging with love, jealousy, and anger, went to his cave; and calling aloud in the Egyptian tongue, so soon as he heard himself answered towards the cave's mouth by a Grecian, making to the person by the direction of her voice, he caught her by the hair with his left hand, and (supposing her to be *Chariclea*) with his right hand plunged his sword into her breast. THEOBALD.

Line 178. ———case?] *Case* is a word used contemptuously for *skin*. JOHNSON.

Line 215. *Then he's a rogue, after a passy-measure, or a pavin, &c.]* A *passy-measure pavin* may perhaps mean a *pavin danced out of time*. *Sir Toby* might call him by this title, because he was drunk at a time when he should have been sober, and in a condition to attend on the wounded knight.



This dance is mentioned in *Stephen Gosson's Schoole of Abuse*, containing a *pleasant Invective against Poets, Pipers, &c.* 1579. It is enumerated as follows, among other dances:

“Dumps, pavins, galliardes, measures, fancyes, or newe streynes.” I do not, at last, see how the sense will completely quadrate on the present occasion. STEEVENS.

Line 234. *A natural perspective,*] *A perspective* seems to be taken for shows exhibited through a glass with such lights as make the pictures appear really protuberant. The Duke therefore says, that nature has here exhibited such a show, where shadows seem realities; where that which is *not* appears like that which is. JOHNSON.

Line 302. *A most extracting frenzy*——] *i. e.* *A frenzy* that drew me away from every thing but its own object.

WARBURTON.

Line 316. ——*you must allow vox.*] The Clown begins reading the letter in some fantastical manner, on which Olivia asks him, *if he is mad.* No, madam, says he, *I do but barely deliver the sense of this madman's epistle; if you would have it read as it ought to be, that is, with such a frantic accent and gesture as a madman would read it, you must allow vox, i. e. you must furnish the reader with a voice, or, in other words, read it yourself.* STEEVENS.

Line 319. ——*but to read his right wits,*] To represent his present state of mind, is to read a madman's letter, as I now do, like a madman. JOHNSON.

Line 339. *One day shall crown the alliance on't, so please you,*] The word *on't*, in this place, is mere nonsense. I doubt not the poet wrote,——*an't so please you.* HEATH.

This is well conjectured; but *on't* may relate to the double character of sister and wife. JOHNSON.

Line 346. ——*against the metal of your sex,*] *Metal* here means delicacy and softness.



Line 369. — *lighter* — ] People of less dignity or importance. JOHNSON.

Line 373. — *geck*, ] A fool. JOHNSON.

— 381. — *here were presuppos'd* — ] *Presuppos'd*, for imposed. WARBURTON.

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“ My legs can keep no *measure* in delight,

“ When my poor heart no *measure* keeps in grief.”

Line 85. —*your friend ?*] *Friend* was used for lover in Shakspeare's time,



Line 94. ———*the lute should be like the case !]* i. e. That your *face* should be as homely and as coarse as your *mask*.

THEOBALD.

Line 139. ———*his villainy ;]* By which she means his *malice* and *impiety*. By his impious jests, she insinuates, he *pleased* libertines ; and by his *devising slanders* of them, he angered them.

WARBURTON.

Line 179. *Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.]* The signification of *blood* here is, *amorous desire*. So also in *All's well that Ends well*, Act 3. Sc. 7.

“ Now his important *blood* will nought deny

“ That she'll demand.”

Line 188. ———*usurer's chain ?]* *Usury* seems about this time to have been a common topic of invective. I have three or four dialogues, pasquils, and discourses on the subject, printed before the year 1600. From every one of these it appears, that the merchants were the chief *usurers* of the age.

STEEVENS.

Line 213. ———*as melancholy as a lodge in a warren ;]* A parallel thought occurs in the first chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet, describing the desolation of Judah, says,—“ The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as “ a *lodge* in a garden of cucumbers,” &c. I am informed, that near Aleppo, these lonely buildings are *still* made use of, it being necessary, that the fields where water-melons, cucumbers, &c. are raised, should be regularly watched.

STEEVENS.

Line 215. ———*of this young lady ;]* Benedick speaks of Hero as if she were on the stage. Perhaps, both she and Leonato, were meant to make their entrance with Don Pedro. When Beatrice enters, she is spoken of as coming in alone.

STEEVENS.

Line 244. ———*such impossible conveyance.]* i. e. In the nature of a slight-of-hand trick, done with all the dexterity and apparent *impossibility* of a juggler.



Line 266. —bring you the length of Prester John's foot ; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard ;] *i. e.* I will undertake the most difficult task, rather than have any conversation with lady Beatrice. Alluding to the difficulty of access to either of those monarchs, but more particularly to the former. STEEVENS.

Line 316. *Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burned ;]* I believe we should read, *Thus goes every one to the wood but I, and I am sun-burnt.* Thus does every one but I find a shelter, and I am left exposed to wind and sun. It is said of a woman, who accepts a worse match than those which she had refused, that she has passed through the wood, and at last taken a crooked stick. Shakspeare, in *All's well that Ends well*, uses the phrase, *to go to the world, for marriage.* JOHNSON.

Line 343. —*she hath often dreamed of unhappiness,]* Thus Beaumont and Fletcher, in their comedy of *The Maid of the Mill*.

—*My dreams are like my thoughts, honest and innocent :*

*Yours are unhappy.*

WARBURTON.

Line 418. Bora. *Go then, find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro, and the count Claudio alone ; tell them that you know Hero loves me ;—Offer them instances, which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window ; hear me call Margaret, Hero ; hear Margaret term me Claudio ; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding.]* The business stands thus ; Claudio, a favourite of the Arragon prince, is by his intercessions with her father, to be married to fair Hero ; Don John, natural brother of the prince, and a hater of Claudio, is in his spleen zealous to disappoint the match. Borachio, a rascally dependant on Don John, offers his assistance, and engages to break off the marriage by this stratagem. “Tell the prince and Claudio (says he) that Hero is in love with me ; they won't believe it ; offer them



“proofs, as that they shall see me converse with her in her  
 “chamber-window. I am in the good graces of her wait-  
 “ing-woman, Margaret; and I’ll prevail with Margaret, at  
 “a dead hour of night to personate her mistress Hero; do  
 “you then bring the prince and Claudia to overhear our  
 “discourse; and they shall have the torment to hear *me*  
 “address Margaret by the name of Hero; and her to say  
 “sweet things to me by the name of Claudio.”—This is  
 the substance of Borachio’s device to make Hero suspected  
 of disloyalty, and to break off her match with Claudio.

THEOBALD.

Line 477. ———*and her hair shall be of what colour it please  
 God.*] Satirically alluding to the fashion of dying the hair,  
 in Shakspeare’s time.

Line 544. *Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits.*] Alluding to  
 the *stalking horse*, well known to the fowler in the fenn coun-  
 tries, who conceals himself under it, till he makes sure of  
 his shot.

Line 591. *O, she tore the letter into a thousand half-pence;]*  
*i. e.* into a thousand pieces of the same bigness. This is  
 farther explained by a passage in *As you like it*:

—————*There were none principal; they were all like one  
 another as half-pence are.*

THEOBALD.

### ACT III.

Line 70. *If low, an agate very vilely cut:]* Meaning the  
 comparison between a little man and an *agate* stone; Fal-  
 staff says to his page:

“I was never so man’d with an *agate* till now.”

Line 114. *What fire is in mine ears?]* Alluding to a pro-  
 verbial saying of the common people, that their ears burn,  
 when others are talking of them.

WARBURTON.

Line 119. *Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand;]* This



Image is taken from falconry. She had been charged with being as wild as *haggards of the rock*; she therefore says, that *wild as her heart is, she will tame it to the hand.* JOHNSON.

Line 159. —slops;] *Slops* are loose breeches or trowsers.

Line 190. *She shall be buried with her face upwards.*] The meaning seems to be, that she who acted upon principles contrary to others, should be buried with the same contrariety. JOHNSON.

The passage perhaps means only—*She shall be buried in her lover's arms.* So in *The Winter's Tale*:

“*Flo.* What? like a corse?”

“*Per.* No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;

“Not like a corse:—or if,—not to be buried,

“*But quick and in my arms.*”

STEEVENS.

Line 446. —rabato—] A collarband; a ruff.

Thus, in the comedy of *Law Tricks, &c.* 1608:

“Broke broad jests upon her narrow heel,

“Pok'd her *rabatos*, and survey'd her steel.”

This passage will likewise serve for an additional explanation of the *poking-sticks of steel*, mentioned in *The Winter's Tale.* STEEVENS.

Line 488. —no barns.] A quibble between *barns*, repositories of corn, and *bairns*, the old word for children.

JOHNSON.

Line 496. —turn'd Turk,] *i. e.* Taken captive by love, and turned a renegado to his religion. WARBURTON.

This interpretation is somewhat far-fetched, yet, perhaps, it is right. JOHNSON.

Line 517. —some moral—] That is, some secret meaning, like the *moral* of a fable. JOHNSON.

Line 528. —he eats his meat without grudging:] I do not see how this is a proof of Benedick's change of mind. It would afford more proof of amorousness to say, *he eats not*



*his meat without grudging*; but it is impossible to fix the meaning of proverbial expressions: perhaps, *to eat meat without grudging*, was the same as, *to do as others do*, and the meaning is, *he is content to live by eating like other mortals, and will be content, notwithstanding his boasts, like other mortals, to have a wife.* JOHNSON.

Line 551. *I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.*] There is much humour, and extreme good sense under the covering of this blundering expression. It is a sly insinuation that length of years, and the being much *hacknied in the ways of men*, as Shakspeare expresses it, take off the gloss of virtue, and bring much defilement on the manners. For, as a great wit says, *Youth is the season of virtue: corruptions grow with years, and I believe the oldest rogue in England is the greatest.* WARBURTON.

Line 573. — *it is a world to see!*] i. e. It is curious or wonderful to observe

#### ACT IV.

Line 44. — *luxurious bed:*] That is, *lascivious*. *Luxury* is the confessor's term for unlawful pleasures of the sex.

JOHNSON.

Line 64. — *chaste as is the bud*—] Before the air has tasted its sweetness.

JOHNSON.

Line 144. *The story that is printed in her blood?*] That is, *the story which her blushes discover to be true.*

JOHNSON.

Line 152. — *smirched*—] i. e. *Soiled, sullied.*

— 213. — *bent of honour*;] *Bent* is used by our author for the utmost degree of any passion, or mental quality. Benedict always says in this play, *her affection has its full bent*. The expression is derived from archery; the bow has its *bent*, when it is drawn as far as it can be.

JOHNSON.

Line 235. — *ostentation*;] *Show, appearance.* JOHNSON.



Line 252. ———*we rack the value ;]* *i. e.* We exaggerate the value. The allusion is to *rack-rents*. STEEVENS.

Line 277. ———*my inwardness——]* *Inward* means, to be intimate with: as in *Measure for Measure*:

“ I was an inward of his.”

Line 328. *I am gone, though I am here:] i. e.* I am out of your mind already, though I remain in person before you.

STEEVENS.

Line 341. *I would eat his heart in the market-place.]* A savage sentiment for a woman; but the same expression is frequent in *The Iliad* of Homer.

Line 351. ———*a goodly count-confect ;]* A sugar-candy sort of nobleman.

Line 377. ———*we have the exhibition to examine.]* Meaning, we have the examination to take.

Line 390. Con. Bor. *Yea, Sir, we hope.*

Dogb. *Write down—that they hope they serve God:—and write God first ; for God defend—but God should go before such villains !]* This short passage, which is truly humorous and in character, I have added from the old quarto.

Besides, it supplies a defect: for, without it, the Town-Clark asks a question of the prisoners, and goes on without staying for any answer to it. THEOBALD.

ACT V.

Line 16. *If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard ;*  
*Cry,—sorrow, wag ! and hem, when he should groan ;]*

Dr. Johnson does not approve of either of the conjectures made by the different commentators. He says, I point thus:

*If such an one will smile, and stroke his beard ;*  
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That is, *If he will smile, and cry sorrow be gone, and hem instead of groaning.* The order in which *and* and *cry* are placed is harsh, and this harshness made the sense mistaken. Range the words in the common order, and my reading will be free from all difficulty. JOHNSON.

Line 19. — *candle wasters;*] Probably means, those who have recourse to *revelry* and *midnight orgies*.

Line 33. — *than advertisement.*] That is, *than admonition, than moral instruction.* JOHNSON.

Line 38. *However they have writ the style of Gods,*] This alludes to the extravagant titles the Stoics gave their wise men. *Sapiens ille cum Diis ex pare vivit.* Senec. Ep. 39. *Jupiter quo antecedit virum bonum? diutius bonus est.* *Sapiens nihilo se minoris æstimat.* *Deus non vincit sapientem felicitate.* Ep. 73. WARBURTON.

Line 39. *And make a pish at chance and sufferance.*] Alludes to their famous *apathy.* WARBURTON.

Line 89. *Despite his nice fence,*] *i. e.* His skill in *fencing.*

— 92. *Can'st thou so daff me?*] To *daffe* and *doffe* are synonymous terms, that mean, to *put off*: which is the very sense required here, and what Leonato would reply upon Claudio's saying, he would have nothing to do with him.

THEOBALD.

Line 112. *Scambling,*] Means, *scrambling.*

— 121. — *we will not wake your patience.*] The old men have been both very angry and outrageous; the prince tells them that he and Claudio *will not wake their patience*; will not any longer force them to *endure* the presence of those whom, though they look on them as enemies, they cannot resist. JOHNSON.

Line 151. — *the minstrels;*] The *minstrels* were, in the time of Elizabeth, itinerants who amused the people with sword-dancing.



Line 160. *Nay, then give him another staff, &c.]* Allusion to tilting. See note, *As you like it*, Act. 3. Sc. 10.

WARBURTON.

Line 164. *—to turn his girdle.]* We have a proverbial speech, *If he be angry, let him turn the buckle of his girdle.* But I do not know its original or meaning. JOHNSON.

A corresponding expression is used to this day in Ireland.—*If he be angry, let him tie up his brogues.* Neither proverb, I believe, has any other meaning than this: If he is in a bad humour, let him employ himself till he is in a better. STEEVENS.

Line 177. *—bid—]* Means invited.

— 187. *—a wise gentleman:]* This jest depending on the colloquial use of words is now obscure; perhaps we should read, *a wise gentle man*, or *a man wise enough to be a coward.* Perhaps *wise gentleman* was in that age used ironically, and always stood for *silly fellow.* JOHNSON.

Line 222. *What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!]* It was esteemed a mark of levity and want of becoming gravity, at that time, *to go in the doublet and hose, and leave off the cloak*, to which this well-turned expression alludes. The thought is, that love makes a man as ridiculous, and exposes him as naked as being in the *doublet and hose* without a cloak. WARBURTON.

Line 231. *—ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance:]* A pun upon the word *raisins*.

Line 249. *—one meaning well suited]* That is, *one meaning is put into many different dresses*; the prince having asked the same question in four modes of speech. JOHNSON.

Line 316. *Possess the people, &c.]* i. e. *Inform*, or make the people acquainted with it.

Line 325. *And she alone is heir to both of us;]* Shakspeare seems to have forgot what he had made Leonato say, in the fifth scene of the first act, to Antonio: *How now, brother; where is my cousin your son? hath he provided the musick?*

ANONYMOUS.



Line 336. —packed in all this wrong,] *i. e.* A confederate in the mischief.

Line 347. —and borrows money in God's name;] The invocation of the common beggar.

Line 383. To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep below stairs? I suppose every reader will find the meaning. JOHNSON.

Line 391. —I give thee the bucklers.] I suppose, that to give the bucklers is, to yield, or to lay by all thoughts of defence, so *clipeum abjicere*. The rest deserves no comment.

JOHNSON.

Line 453 —in the time of good neighbours:] *i. e.* When men were not envious, but every one gave another his due. The reply is extremely humorous. WARBURTON.

Line 482. Done to death—] An obsolete phrase common to our author, and the ancient writers, implying dead.

Line 484. —in guerdon—] Guerdon means, reward, recompence.

Line 492. Those that slew thy virgin knight;] Knight, in its original signification, means follower or pupil, and in this sense may be feminine. Helena, in *All's well that Ends well*, uses *knight* in the same signification. JOHNSON.

In the times of chivalry, a *virgin knight* was one who had as yet atchieved no adventure. Hero had as yet atchieved no matrimonial one. It may be added, that a *virgin knight* wore no device on his shield, not having atchieved any.

STEEVENS.

END OF THE ANNOTATIONS ON MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

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Isaac Reed, Esq. ; with copious annotations

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